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# THE MEANING OF "CHURCHMANSHIP"

BY THE

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*1876 -*

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## PREFACE

THE object of this volume is to explain what is meant by and involved in Churchmanship. I have tried to write it in such a way that no previous knowledge of the subject is assumed. I do not know if I have succeeded, but I am sure that it was worth making the attempt. There are many puzzled people in the world to-day. They find it difficult to know what they can rightly believe. They have a general idea that standards of belief have altered very much during the last fifty years; and also that the Church seems to have altered considerably. Is there any place for them in the Church, they wonder. Can the Church do anything with their rather hazy opinions? Can it do anything to give these opinions better definition? Is the Church a mere back-number, or is it possible that a Church revival is just the one thing that would save the world from its present chaos?

These are the people I have had most in mind, and if it is of service even to one of them it will be well worth the effort of writing it.

But I hope that perhaps it may also be useful to members of the Church who do know where they stand. It provides within a very small compass a conspectus of the doctrine, history, and approved practice of the Church. I believe it is accurate, and I hope it is not hurtful to any one's feelings.

✠ KENNETH BRECHIN

#### NOTE

It may be worth pointing out that the second quarter of the book is historical. If you are not interested in history, you can leave out Chapters V to IX. But I hope you will come back to them when you have read the rest!



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# THE MEANING OF CHURCHMANSHIP

## CHAPTER I

### *RELIGION*

Religion means paying attention to God. If God exists at all He must be all-important. Attention is paid to God, (1) by prayer, (2) by obedience. Conduct is the test of true religion. Conscientiousness.

**R**ELIGION means paying attention to God. Irreligion means forgetfulness of God. It is plain that if God exists at all, His existence is the all-important fact for all of us. God is not just one person among many others, so that we may choose whether or no we will include Him among our circle of acquaintances. If we spell 'God' with a capital letter, we mean One who created the whole universe, by whose will it holds together, and for whose purposes it exists. If we mean anything less than this, we ought to speak about 'a god,' which merely means some imaginary being whom we have set up for ourselves as an object of worship.



Civilized people do not believe in 'gods.' For us it is God, or nothing. But if there is no God, the whole world came into existence by accident. If there is no God, the whole orderliness of nature and the uniformity of natural law is unintelligible. If there is no God, there is no unifying purpose in the universe. If there is no God, all that has been noblest in human history is founded on delusion. If there is no God, there is no sense or meaning left in the million ages of the past and future.

But if we believe that God exists, it is mere foolishness to forget Him. It is behaviour like that of a child who is so much occupied with his toys that he forgets his mother, or of a man whose mind is so full of betting that he neglects his work and ignores his family. In these human comparisons the most obvious fact is that the child is ungrateful and the man unkind : but in regard to God the outstanding point is the foolishness of behaving as though there were no guiding hand controlling our life, and no supreme purpose welding all our lives together, *when all the while we really believe that there is.* It is ungrateful to forget about God ; in a sense we may even say it is unkind ; but after all it is we who need God, and not He who needs us, and the central fact is that it is *foolish*. If there is one supreme purpose of human life hidden in the mind of God, then everything else in life depends on that, and we are missing the whole meaning of life if we ignore Him.



It is religion and nothing else which really makes sense of the world.

How, then, shall we pay attention to God?

1. By prayer. Prayer is best described as *the lifting up of the mind and heart to God*. It is often thought that it means asking God for what we want. It is true that prayer does include asking, though indeed our requests should not be so much for what we want as for what God wills for us ; but asking is only a very small part of prayer. Good parents teach their children not only to say 'Please,' but also 'Thank you' and 'I beg your pardon.' In the same way our address to God must be not only, 'Please give me what I ought to have,' but also, 'Thank You for all You keep on giving me,' and, 'I beg Your pardon for all the wrong things I keep on doing and saying and thinking, and the good things which I fail to do.'

We teach children also to say 'Good morning' and 'Good night' ; and one of the ways in which we pay attention to God is by giving Him at least twice a day the kind of greeting which the Creator looks for from those whom He has made.

Further, we do not like children to be always talking and thinking about themselves and never about other people. In the same way we ourselves when we speak to God must not forget to speak about other people's needs as well as our own.

So we get these five kinds of prayers which we all ought to say at least every morning and

evening if we are to pay proper attention to God: (1) Petition, or asking for ourselves; (2) thanksgiving, or saying Thank You; (3) confession, or asking God's forgiveness; (4) praise or adoration, which is just giving God the reverent greeting which He ought to have; (5) intercession, or praying for other people.

We may say then, if we like, that prayer means speaking to God, and saying certain things which He expects to hear from us, not because He does not know them, but because He likes to hear us say them. But our first definition of prayer—the lifting up of the heart and mind to God—was really better, because prayer does not really need any words at all. To think of God is to pray; to love Him is to pray; to resolve to serve Him is to pray. These things need few words, if any.

But although prayer does not need many words, *it does need a definite time*. There is a good proverb which says, 'Any time is no time.' A general idea that we ought to pay some attention to God will get us nowhere. There are so many calls on our attention which are far more insistent and seem much more urgent. It seems, then, that if religion is to form any part of our lives we must make some rule about prayer; and if it is true, as Browning says, that 'religion's all, or nothing,' then that rule must be adequate and must be punctiliously kept. If religion is to be 'all' to us, we must find time to lift our mind and heart to God each morning and each even-

ing at the least. We cannot get our direction for the day if we have not begun by devoting it to God. We cannot lie down in peace unless we have made our peace with God.

2. But it is not enough to pay attention to God with the mind and heart. We must also *pay attention to His requirements*. Otherwise our prayer will only be a mockery. We pay attention to God by obedience. This is the moral or ethical side of religion, and it is very important. There is something very wrong with our life of prayer if it has no practical effect on our daily lives. S. James goes so far as to describe true religion as actually consisting in visiting the fatherless and widows in their affliction and keeping ourselves unspotted from the world.<sup>1</sup> Of course this does not mean that religion is the same as morality, or 'being good'; clearly religion must have some direct reference to God; but it does mean that a man who seems to be religious yet shows himself unkind or spiteful or impure in ordinary life, and is not trying to overcome these faults, is not really paying attention to God at all. He is merely amusing or comforting himself with the outward actions of religion while all the time his heart is far from God. As S. James says, speaking of the man who will not try to control his tongue, 'this man's religion is vain.'<sup>2</sup> The point is not that we may substitute goodness for prayer; any moral goodness which

<sup>1</sup> S. Jas. i. 27.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*, i. 26.



leaves God out is uncertain, weak, and impoverished. But any prayer which is a real approach to God must necessarily influence the character and have its effect on conduct. Only, as a wise man has said, 'Whereas most people seem to think that conduct is the supremely important thing, and that worship may be a great help to good conduct, the truth is very different; worship is the supremely important thing, but conduct is the test of your worship.'

If, then, we are to be religious, we must listen to the voice of our conscience, because it is through our conscience that God shows us what we ought to do. To try to obey conscience is one of the principal ways in which we can pay attention to God. We may make mistakes about what we ought to do; but when we feel we *ought* to behave in some particular manner, then it is God who tells our conscience that this is what we must do. We know that we may be mistaken about what is right; but we know also that if we think a thing to be right then we are responsible to God for doing it, and if we think a thing to be wrong we are responsible to Him for not doing it. To the religious man duty is a matter of obedience to God, not of self-pleasing. We must *inform* our conscience to the best of our ability; that is to say, we must try to have *true* ideas about right and wrong: but in the last resort the central principle of morals is 'Conscience must always be followed.'



## CHAPTER II

*CHRISTIANITY*

How do we come to know about God? Through great teachers in all ages, but especially through Jesus Christ. Who is He? He asks that question Himself, and gradually reveals to the disciples the true answer: He is God in Manhood. Doctrines of the Incarnation and the Trinity.

WE have seen that religion means paying attention to God both by letting the mind and heart dwell upon Him, and also by trying to be obedient to His will. But this is very vague. What do we know about God, and what do we know about His will? Are we just to guess about Him or have we any information?

All through the history of the world there have been men and women who seem to have had a particular insight into the heart of reality, or to put it in simpler language, men and women who have had a special knowledge of God. Such people have never been confined to one race or nation; but any one who knows anything of religious history will realize that there was one nation which in the end got very much nearer than any other to a personal knowledge of God. That nation was, of course, the Jews.

One after another, for a period of two thousand years, there was a line of men who certainly believed themselves to be in intimate touch with God and who more and more devoted themselves to preparing their own nation to be the recipient of God's final and supreme revelation of Himself. The line of the Jewish prophets, as they were called, comes to an end with the heroic figure of John, the son of Zacharias, known as 'the Baptist,' the result of whose ministry was to leave all Jewry on a tiptoe of expectation with a sense that they were on the eve of something greater than they had ever known before. He pointed to One who was and ever had been far greater than himself, Jesus, the Son of God.

It is this Jesus who is the key to the problem of the character of God and the meaning of doing God's will. Compared with Him the whole line of prophets were men groping in the dark. He speaks of God with supreme certainty, and arouses in us a conviction that He *knows* the truth about Him. Little by little we see it dawn upon His followers that their teacher is more than prophet and more than lawgiver: that He speaks direct from God.

This Jesus was put to death by the Jews, and rose again from the dead. That fact is historically the foundation stone of Christianity. It was because the disciples were quite sure that He was actually alive, although He had died, that they had the conviction and the courage

which sent them all over the world teaching that He was the Saviour, not of Jews only but of all mankind.

*Who, then, is this Jesus* who claimed to be the Christ of God, and who by that title has given a name to the greatest of the religions of the world?

Let us go to the Gospels. Our Lord does not begin His ministry by proclaiming Himself as the Messenger of Heaven. To begin with He says nothing at all about Himself: He just teaches, and heals the sick, and feeds the hungry, and awaits the result. That result when it comes is inevitable. It is summed up in the words of those officials whom His enemies once sent to arrest Him, or of the multitudes who had witnessed the healing of a deaf and dumb man: 'Never man spake like this man,'<sup>1</sup> 'He hath done all things well.'<sup>2</sup>

People sometimes speak as though our Lord were simply a great teacher or a great prophet. In actual fact nothing is more striking than the contrast between the tone of His words and those of any mere teacher or even mere prophet. Where the teacher says, 'It is written,' and the prophet says, 'Thus saith the Lord,' Jesus says, 'I say unto you.' Nor is it only the teaching of human authorities that He professes to correct; He claims to revise the divine law, given on Mount Sinai. 'It was said to them of

<sup>1</sup> S. John vii. 46.

<sup>2</sup> S. Mark vii. 37.

old time . . . but *I* say unto you.<sup>1</sup> He insists that even John the Baptist, His forerunner and herald, is 'more than a prophet'<sup>2</sup> for no other reason than that it was his office to prepare the way before Himself. How much more, then, did Jesus think of Himself as altogether on a different level from any of the prophets! The more we study Him, the clearer is our impression that here is One who was serenely conscious of His own supernatural character. He claims to be the refreshment and consolation of every human soul: He says calmly that at the end of the world it is He Himself who will be the judge of all men, and that they will be judged according to their faithfulness to the teaching which He has given. He asserts plainly that no one knows Him except the Eternal Father, and that no one knows the Father except Himself and any others whom He admits into the secret.

It is not surprising, then, that the first climax of His earthly ministry is the moment when at last He challenges the disciples to answer the question, 'Who am I?' and that He accepts with rapturous gladness the answer, 'Thou art the Christ.'<sup>3</sup> Now He is recognized as the long-expected Hero in whom God's choice of the Jewish race would at last be justified.

But though this answer of S. Peter marks a step in the recognition of the true nature of

<sup>1</sup> S. Matt. v. 27.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*, xi. 9.

<sup>3</sup> S. Mark viii. 29.



Christ it could not be the final answer to the question. Just as it was already clear to S. Peter that Jesus was more than a prophet, so very soon His disciples found that He was far more than the expected National Hero whom the prophets had foretold. He rose from the dead : He ascended visibly into heaven : ten days later, as He had foretold, a new mysterious and illuminating power, which they recognized as the very presence of God, came down upon the assembled Church on the great Day of Pentecost. From this time onwards the Christian name for Jesus is no longer simply Christ, but Lord. He is the Son of God : the Prince of life : the Lord of glory. He is again and again associated with the Eternal Father as the source of grace and mercy. Finally, as time goes on, it is taught that through Christ all things have their being. 'All things have been created by Him and for Him : He is before all things and in Him all things consist.'<sup>1</sup> 'In Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead.'<sup>2</sup> In other words, in the depth of His Being Jesus is God.

We must not run away with the idea that all this theological language and this exaltation of Jesus to divine honours is just an instance of the way in which the Church has spoiled the simple Gospel. The first three Gospels were written *after* S. Paul's Epistles, and two of them were by disciples of S. Paul. It is quite certain

<sup>1</sup> Col. i. 16, 17.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*, ii. 9.

that S. Mark and S. Luke<sup>1</sup> must have believed that our Lord was God: only they were too truthful to pretend that He was recognized as such while He was still on earth. While He was on earth, men listened to His words with awe and wonder; but when His claims were vindicated by the Resurrection and the Ascension and the coming of the Holy Spirit they were driven to find some adequate answer to the question, Who is this? We find that answer in various forms scattered through the apostolic writings of the New Testament. Perhaps the clearest language is to be found in S. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians. 'Being,' he says, 'in the form of God He counted it not a prize to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation and took upon Him the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men.'<sup>2</sup> That is the doctrine which was accepted without question by the Church and has ever since formed the centre of all Christian teaching. It is called the doctrine of the Incarnation. It means that our Lord's beginning is not to be sought, as in the case of all other men, in His conception or His birth. Those were the beginnings of His manhood. But before He became man He

<sup>1</sup> The authorship of 'the Gospel according to S. Matthew' is uncertain. But the tendency of that Gospel is certainly to enhance the dignity of Christ, not to diminish it. If it is certain that S. Mark and S. Luke believed in the Deity of Christ, much more S. Matthew.

<sup>2</sup> Phil. ii. 6, 7.

was and always had been God. God can have no beginning and no end. But at a certain moment in time God took into Himself a human nature like our own, but sinless; He 'was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man.'

That is the root fact of Christianity, and it will be seen at once what light it throws on the nature and character of God and on His will for mankind. It shows God as the Lover of men, ready for our sake to become one of us, and bear all the consequences of sinlessness in a sinful world. It shows God as our Saviour, willing by sacrifice to bring us back to Himself. It shows Him as the Teacher and pattern of the good life, leading us by word and example to be perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect.

It shows also something of the mystery of the nature of God. There is only one God; but that does not mean that God is just a bare and empty unity. God can hold converse with Himself. There is in God both Fatherhood and Sonship. They are in Him eternally, but only became known to man when God the Son took human flesh and blood and appeared on earth in clear distinction from the Father.

So in the same way the Holy Spirit of God did not come into being for the first time when He descended on the disciples on the Day of Pentecost. When we say that God is both *over and above* all creation and also *in* all creation, that seems to imply a third form of Being in

God, which we call Holy Spirit. Until the Day of Pentecost that third form of Being could only be dimly guessed at; but when our Lord kept His often reiterated promise, and the Holy Ghost came down upon the first disciples with visible and audible signs of fire and wind, it became clear that there was also a distinction within the Godhead between God as He was manifest externally in Jesus and God who by His interior presence made all Christians to be temples of the Deity.

This is the meaning of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. There are three 'Persons' in one God. This does not mean three Persons in the modern sense of the word 'person': we are not to think of God as a *Group* of three separate, individual personalities; but as one Being with three simultaneous and eternal activities. These three activities were manifested separately when God the Son was made Man, and when the Spirit descended on the first disciples. But this did not mean that God was then divided into three, but that the threefold nature of God, hitherto hidden, was then revealed.

We must never think that this mystery of the Trinity makes God so mysterious that He is unintelligible. On the contrary it is the very function of Christ to display God in a way that we can understand, and the very function of the Spirit of Pentecost to make us able to understand Him. By understanding Him, we get to know Him; and if we know Him we



cannot but love Him. Best of all, to know and love God means that we enter into the very object for which we were created. Life is no longer merely an activity for a time which comes to an end with death. If we know and love God we have a life which is eternal. We have to die, of course, as Christ Himself died ; but those whom Christ has taught to know and love God need not fear death, because to them it will be the gate of everlasting life.

## CHAPTER III

*THE CHURCH*

Christianity is not the religion of a book but of a Person and of a Society. 'Church' was the well-known name for the special People of God, that is, the Jewish nation. The 'Church' which our Lord built is the continuation of the old Jewish Church, but differs from it: (1) by being Catholic instead of national; (2) by being filled with the Spirit instead of depending on the Law; (3) by being final instead of merely preparatory. The 'Body of Christ.' 'One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic.' The Church Triumphant and the Church Expectant.

PEOPLE sometimes say that Christianity is 'the religion of a book.' Yet there is only one occasion on which we hear of our Lord writing anything. That was when a poor woman was brought to Him charged with wrongdoing, and 'Jesus stooped down, and with His finger wrote on the ground.'<sup>1</sup> We do not know what it was that He wrote, but whatever it was could easily be obliterated; that indeed seems to have been the meaning of His action. How different from the abiding words of a book!

Our Lord's method was not to write a book for men to study, but to train disciples and imbue them with His Spirit. The writing

<sup>1</sup> S. John viii. 6.

down came afterwards, and nothing could be more precious to us than the books of the New Testament which give us the story of the actual words and deeds and sufferings of Christ, with the inspired interpretation of them by the writers of the Epistles. But in our Lord's method the men came first and the writings afterwards.

If we read the Gospels carefully we shall find that our Lord's first actions seem to have been designed to draw attention to Himself, and create an atmosphere first of wonder, then of interest, and then of earnest attention. As His ministry proceeds there comes to be a definite group of people who form what we might call a 'following.' Those outside the group begin to manifest a hostility which becomes more and more marked. Thus the followers of Christ become more and more a class apart, and begin to deserve the name 'disciples.' As soon as this begins to happen our Lord seems to desire publicity less and less. Finally He withdraws Himself to a large extent even from the general body of disciples and concentrates on the training of an inner circle, consisting of the twelve 'Apostles' together with a small group of favoured and devoted women, and others who seemed capable of helping to make known to the choicer spirits among the Jews the approach of the kingdom of God.

The existence of this inner circle among the disciples is seen very clearly in that most inter-

esting and important book—the Acts of the Apostles—which gives the story of the Ascension and the subsequent events in Christian history. It is the Apostles who witness the Ascension; the Apostles (with the Mother of our Lord and some others) who await with prayer the coming of the promised Holy Spirit; the Apostles who at once take action to bring their numbers back to the original twelve by selecting Matthias in place of Judas the traitor. So when on the Day of Pentecost our Lord kept His promise and poured out His Spirit on the disciples we find the Apostles once more standing out as leaders and spokesmen of the little Christian body. There is a sharp and clear distinction between them and the rest of the disciples, just as there is a sharp and clear distinction between a disciple and a non-Christian.

Already on the Day of Pentecost, only ten days after the Ascension, we have in being the nucleus of a new society: a group of people banded together as disciples, and within this group a select few, appointed by Christ Himself as leaders and officers—an ‘executive’ as we might call them. A name had to be found for this community, and there was no hesitation what it should be called: it was ‘the Church.’

That was not a new title or a new idea. On the contrary both word and thing were conspicuous features in the Jewish theocratic polity.



Among Greek-speaking Jews 'the Church' was the recognized name for the Jewish nation, God's own people, set apart, sanctified, predestined, the trustees of the oracles of God, the seed-plot from which Messiah was to spring. It was our Lord Himself who first used the word to describe His own followers. 'Upon this rock,' He said, 'I will build My Church.'<sup>1</sup> It was a sufficiently startling expression to Jewish ears. Had a Church yet to be built? What, then, had happened to the 'Church' which was already in existence, the Church of the Jews? The answer is clear. In rejecting Christ they had thrown away their claim to be God's people, and the 'Church' must be built again from the foundations.

There are three great differences between the old Jewish Church and the Christian Church built by Christ.

1. The old Church was strictly national. In early days the Chosen People waged wars of extermination against their non-Jewish enemies and believed that they were thus doing service to the Jewish God. But at no date could any one become member of it without being, as we should say, a naturalized Jew. If a male, he would be circumcised; and in any case the new member would be admitted by a ceremonial baptism to the status of a 'proselyte.' The new Church, on the other hand, is not national but

<sup>1</sup> S. Matt. xvi. 18.

'Catholic.' That is to say, it is intended for all men everywhere.

2. The old Church had only one sanctuary and place of sacrifice, the Temple at Jerusalem. Every devout Jew would attend here on specified occasions and join in sacrificial worship. Apart from this the only worship which was possible was attendance at the local synagogue for prayers and the reading of the law. But the new Church has no such local restriction. Wherever the Gospel has been preached a church building is, if possible, erected, and the great act of sacrificial worship which we call the Holy Communion Service at once becomes the rallying point of Christian devotion.

3. The old Church was preparatory: it looked forward to the day when it would please God to visit His people. The new Church, on the contrary, rests on the fulfilment of the divine promise. 'God *hath* visited and redeemed His people.'<sup>1</sup> The Christ has come; and not only has He come, but He has sent His Spirit to dwell within His Church, uniting it to God. Christian Baptism is not a mere act of naturalization into a Church which is also a nation; it is an act through which we are endowed with the Holy Spirit of God.

That is how it comes about that 'I believe in the Church' has actually become part of the historic Creed of Christendom. At first sight that seems astonishing. It is easy to under-

<sup>1</sup> S. Luke i. 68.

stand that people should believe in God, and in Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost. 'I believe in God' is as intelligible a statement as 'I do not believe in fairies,' or, if we take another but quite ordinary meaning of the word 'believe,' it may be taken in a sense which is fairly comparable to 'I believe in my doctor.' So also there is no difficulty about the meaning of the other clauses which are contained in the first and second parts of the Nicene or the Apostles' Creed. They mean that we believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God in a sense in which nobody else can be so called, and that the historical statements about His birth and death and that which followed after death are true. Nor is it difficult to paraphrase the last few clauses of the Apostles' Creed. In them we say that we believe that the saints are in communion with each other, that sins can be and are forgiven, that the body will rise, and that eternal life is a spiritual reality. But how are we to *believe in the Church*? The existence of the Church is a matter of observation, not of belief, and if we remember that after all *we* are the Church and that the creeds are the official utterances of the Church, it looks as though believing in the Church was very much like believing in ourselves. If we define the Church as the total number of practising Christians in the world, it certainly would seem remarkable that this very mixed community, even if it could be called a community in any intelligible sense,

should solemnly profess that it believed in itself!

It seems, then, that if the Church is really the object of belief there must be some deeper meaning in the word than that of the mere totality of those who believe in Christ and are associated in some Christian fellowship.

What, then, is the Church? Fifty years ago Catholic and Protestant theologians would have given diametrically different answers to this question. To the Catholic, the Church is one body, indwelt by the Holy Spirit, teaching in God's Name, with an organization and an ordered ministry which are of divine appointment. On the other hand, it used to be taken for granted by the Protestant that Christianity was a matter of individual salvation, and that therefore the Church could be no more than a religious association of devout Christians who united themselves into congregations. Some would have held that each such congregation constituted a church; others that a church was a group of congregations under a single organization; while some would allow that there was a sense in which the total number of such worshipping communities might be called the universal Church. But far more stress was laid on the idea of an invisible 'Church,' the members of which were known to God alone, and which consisted of the totality of the 'saved' or the predestined. There was general agreement that individual salvation was all that



really mattered and that the existence of every church, whether local or universal, was the result of coalescence rather than of organic growth.

That state of affairs has now to a very large extent come to an end. It would of course be an exaggeration to say that Catholics and Protestants are in complete agreement as to the meaning of the word 'church'; but they are certainly much nearer each other than they were, and this approximation has come about chiefly through a more general recognition of the truth of the Catholic view. The best Protestant theologians of to-day would agree that the Church is a creation of God, not an organization of man; that it is built from above, not from below; that the universal Church is the primary idea and that the local churches are so called because they are, as it were, miniatures of the Great Church; and that this teaching about the Church, so far from being an innovation brought in by S. Paul, is actually a vital part of the original proclamation of the Gospel. It is not too much to say that in this matter the Catholics have convinced the Protestants. The dispute now is concerned rather with the extent of the Church and with its ministry than with its essential character. It is agreed that the New Testament idea of the Church is that it is one world-wide community of men and women, God's new creation, filled and inspired by the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ.

We must always remember that in Scripture 'Spirit' is a personal word. It means much more than 'tone' or 'temper' or 'influence'; it means the very self of the person whose spirit it is. So S. Paul says, 'What man knoweth the things of a man, save the *spirit* of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the *Spirit* of God.'<sup>1</sup> If we have received the Spirit of Christ that means that Christ Himself dwells within us.

That is why the Christian Church is called by S. Paul the Body of Christ. When Christ first came to earth He took a body of flesh and blood of Mary His Mother. This is called His *natural* body. He was embodied in flesh and blood as are other men. When He ascended into heaven He still kept His human body, even though now it was glorified. But because He still desired to be embodied on earth He chose a company of men and women in whom might dwell for ever His Divine Spirit. Just as His natural body was *His* body because it was inhabited and directed by His human spirit, so the ever-increasing Body of the Church is called His mystical Body because it is inhabited and directed by His Divine Spirit, Whom we call the Holy Ghost. The Church is the visible embodiment of Christ upon earth. No doubt the Church represents Christ very unworthily, because she is made up of sinful men and women. Our sins do hinder the witness of the

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. ii. 11.

Church to Christ. But all the same He did send His Spirit down upon us on the Day of Pentecost, and He has never withdrawn that supreme Gift. However unworthily, the Church does embody Christ.

In the Creed there are four epithets applied to the Church. She is One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic. These are called the 'Notes of the Church'; that is to say, the ways in which she can be known or recognized.

It seems clear that in the sense in which we have been using the word there cannot be more than one Church, because Christ cannot have more than one Body. When S. Paul in his Epistles speaks of 'the churches' he is not thinking of competing denominations. In his usage a local group of Christians may be called a 'church' for the very reason that it is the local representative of the all-embracing Church. But when a new body is set up in conscious opposition to the original Church it is very difficult to consider that as being a 'church' in S. Paul's sense. Its members may be members of the universal Church by virtue of their Baptism, but the organization as such is rather a competitor with the Church than an organic part of it; and it seems to be a false charity to confuse this issue.

We shall consider in some later chapters the tragic fact that Christians are disunited. But that does not mean that the unity of the Church has

come to an end. *Unity is not the same as union.* Unity or oneness is an inalienable attribute of the Church. The Church cannot be divided any more than Christ can be divided. But the fact of unity is one thing, the ideal of union is another. *There is unity; there ought to be union.* But disunion cannot destroy unity, any more than the fact that the members of a family have had a disagreement can change them from one family into many. The Church is and must be 'one, because our Lord is one.'

And what is true of unity is true of the other attributes which the Creed assigns to the Church: Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic. The Church is holy because its Lord is holy. However much its holiness may be marred or disguised by sin, the Church retains the aura of its Divine Lord. Awe and reverence are its due: all its children share in the priestly consecration of the Lord's anointed. So also it is catholic because it is the embodiment of the catholic, that is, the *universal*, Christ. The Catholic Church with its broad and pregnant dogmas and the ordered liberty which is its true ideal is capable of receiving every type of man who desires to belong to God.

And finally the Church is apostolic because its Lord is apostolic. He is the One whom the Father sent into the world, and as the Father sent Him, so He sent the Church. Christ is the supreme Missionary and the



Church is nothing if it be not missionary also.<sup>1</sup> All our anxiety to spread the influence of the Church, to make converts; all our eagerness to defend the succession of the bishops, the power of the keys, the teaching authority of the Church, depends on our conviction that her authority is His authority and that when He sent out His Apostles He was in that very act empowering the ministers and members of His Church, each in his own due place, to continue His mission to the world.

But the Catholic conception of the Church is wider still. We have learned, in the light of our Lord's teaching and of the central historical fact of His Resurrection, that the effects of the Redemption are not limited to this world. The doctrines of the future life and of the resurrection of the body, which were held as mere opinions by one party in the Jewish Church, have been solemnly promulgated by our Lord as a part of the Christian faith. Not only are our souls immortal, but our bodies will rise again. We are not to think of the final destiny of mankind as the dim and shadowy existence of ghosts, but as something far richer and fuller than the earthly life. When we die we do not cease to be members of the Church; we are still united to Christ, and still members of His Body. We do not know a great deal about the

<sup>1</sup> The words 'apostolic' and 'missionary,' derived respectively from Greek and Latin, are roughly equivalent to the Anglo-Saxon 'sent out.'

next world, and no doubt too much speculation about it is unhealthy; but the fact that death leaves us in the hands of God, and that He will somehow and sometime fashion us into the likeness of Christ, belongs to the heart of Christianity.

But if that is so, it must lead us on to another doctrine of the Creed: 'I believe in the communion of saints.' If we and the departed are both 'in Christ,' there must of necessity be some kind of union between us. Just as the two hands of Christ upon the Cross were still in vital union with each other though they could not meet, so it must be with the separated members of His mystical Body. They cannot meet, but they are united with each other by the very fact that they are united with Christ. They also are 'one, because their Lord is one.'

This is equally true whatever may be the present condition of any particular departed soul, unless indeed through final impenitence it has made itself incapable of communion with Christ. Those who are living the life of grace upon earth are one with the great saints, with the Blessed Virgin, the holy Apostles, the Martyrs, with all those whom the Epistle to the Hebrews calls 'the spirits of just men made perfect.' But also they are one with all those who died with just such a spark of desire for God as would enable Him to remake their souls. They are one also with those whom they have known and loved on earth.

How can this unity best find expression till we meet again? The practice of the Church provides a very clear answer to this question. We express our sense of unity by praying for each other. We cannot doubt that the dead are praying for us ; and surely they also expect that we shall pray for them.

But at this point it seems that a distinction must be made. It is clear that some of the dead must need our prayers more than others, and equally clear that some of them will pray for us more efficaciously than others. For the most part we think of the dead as being made ready for their final perfection ; but there are also some who have already been made perfect. We usually speak of the former as the Church Expectant and the latter as the Church Triumphant.

It is natural and right that we should long for the prayers of the perfected saints, and a sense of piety and duty bids us pray for those who are still in need of further purification. Our longing for the prayers of the saints may be expressed by asking God to put it into their minds to pray for us : but for very many centuries, almost from the first beginnings of Christianity, we find direct invocation of the saints. The most usual form is the simple one, 'Pray for us,' first found in funeral inscriptions and afterwards coming into general use. There is no need to inquire too curiously how much knowledge of the prayers of individuals is

granted to the blessed. When we say, 'Pray for us,' we are expressing our sense that we need the co-operation of the whole Church in our own acts of prayer, and that the most important part of the Church is its perfected and triumphant part. We must leave to God the way in which He is pleased to see that our need is met.

All who realize in any way the stupendous nature of the Incarnation must see that the Blessed Virgin Mary, 'our Lady' as the English and other Anglican Prayer Books call her, must take the highest place among the saints; and for this reason it is she whose prayers are most frequently invoked. We could not do better than make use of the traditional formula known as the 'Hail Mary.' 'Hail, Mary, full of grace: the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and in the hour of our death. Amen.'

Some, no doubt, will prefer the first part, which is scriptural, to the second, which is late mediaeval; and there is no reason why the first part should not be used by itself. But it should be noted that although this particular invocation is not very ancient the general practice of asking the prayers of the saints can be traced back to the third or fourth century.

As regards our own prayers for the faithful departed there should be no difficulty. If we believe that they are still in existence, and if we



do pray for other people at all, there seems to be no possible reason why we should leave the departed out of our intercession lists. Only, in view of the shadowy nature of our knowledge of the next world we should be well advised to couch our prayers in general terms, and to be content to ask, as the ancient Church did, that they may have 'refreshment, light, and peace.'

## CHAPTER IV

*THE FIRST EXPANSION OF THE  
CHURCH*

Pentecost : the Gift of the Holy Ghost to be the life of the Church. Ever since that day the Church has been filled with the life of God. We receive that life by Baptism, which makes us members of the Church. Fierce opposition aroused by Stephen's teaching that the Jewish religion was superseded by Christianity. Consequent dispersion of Christians and spread of the Church not only among 'God-fearing' Gentiles but among raw heathen. S. Paul arrives in Rome.

OUR Lord told His Apostles that they were to be His witnesses first in Jerusalem, then in all Judaea, then in Samaria, and finally in all the world.<sup>1</sup> Clearly the lifetime of the Apostles themselves was not long enough for this ; so He must have meant that the ministers of the Church who succeeded to their responsibility were to carry on this work of witnessing to Christ all over the world. This is what is called the missionary work of the Church. We read of its beginnings in the Acts of the Apostles, and it is still going on.

Ten days after the Ascension came the great Jewish feast of Pentecost. On this day our

<sup>1</sup> Acts i. 8.

Lord's disciples were gathered together at prayer when something wonderful happened. There was a sound like a strong wind and a strange appearance of a fiery mass which split up into little tongues of flame and hovered over their heads. At the same time they became conscious of a wonderful new presence of God in their inmost selves and they knew that our Lord had kept His promise and that they had received the interior presence of the Holy Ghost.<sup>1</sup>

Pentecost is often called the birthday of the Catholic or world-wide Church. But perhaps it would be more true to say that this was the endowment of the Church with divine life. Our Lord had already formed His Church when He gathered the first disciples round Himself; but though the Church was there it had not fully come to life. The Catholic Church was already in existence when the Day of Pentecost dawned. It consisted of the disciples of Christ. We know from S. Paul that there were more than five hundred of them who saw our Lord after His Resurrection. But though the Church was in existence, it had not yet received its characteristic life. That was what happened at Pentecost. From that moment there has been not only a Church, but a living Church, inspired by the Holy Spirit and truly styled the 'Body of Christ.'

How, then, are others besides the original

<sup>1</sup> Acts ii. 1-4.

disciples to receive this great Gift of heavenly life, the Gift of the Spirit? We need not go far for the answer to that question. On the very day when the Holy Spirit was first given, S. Peter, the leader of the Apostles, preached a great sermon to the assembled multitude of the Jews, the result of which was a wave of revulsion against their awful responsibility for the Crucifixion of Christ. They turned to the Apostles and asked them, 'Men and brethren, what shall we do?' There is no hesitation about the answer: 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the Name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.'<sup>1</sup> But why? The only possible answer seems to be found in the nature of the Church which we have already considered. The Church is the Spirit-filled Body. To join the Church is therefore the normal and appointed way of receiving the Spirit: and Baptism is the way in which we join the Church.<sup>2</sup>

The answer to the question, How did the Church spread over the world? is, By the baptism of new converts. At first, as was natural, and as is the case to this day in districts where Christianity is a novelty, most of the

<sup>1</sup> Acts ii. 37, 38.

<sup>2</sup> Nowadays we more often think of Confirmation as the means by which the Spirit is bestowed on individuals. But it is probable that 'Baptism' in the New Testament usually includes what we call 'Confirmation.' See pp. 116, 117.



newly baptized were adults. They had to be *converted* to Christianity, and you cannot convert a baby! But when two Christians married and had a family it was equally natural that their children should be baptized as soon as possible after they were born. Jewish boys were circumcised a week after birth, and there seemed no reason why the children of Christian parents should be left outside the Christian covenant. The New Testament, however, deals with the missionary period of Church history; so we do not read anything about the baptism of infants; most, if not all, of the Baptisms mentioned are cases of new converts.<sup>1</sup>

We find, then, that on the Day of Pentecost no less than three thousand new converts were baptized.<sup>2</sup> All these, of course, were Jews. The process of Jewish conversions went on steadily. Every day saw new conversions in Jerusalem,<sup>3</sup> until at last we find what modern missionaries call 'mass conversion.' 'Multitudes . . . were added to the Lord.'<sup>4</sup> When it came about that even many of the Jewish priests became Christians<sup>5</sup> it looked as though the battle, so far as the Jewish people was concerned, was near to being won.

<sup>1</sup> We may notice, however, that the whole household of the Philippian gaoler were baptized (*Acts* xvi. 33), and S. Paul (*1 Cor.* vii. 14) speaks of the children of Christians as 'holy,' which would be a strange word for him to use if they were still outside the Church.

<sup>2</sup> *Acts* ii. 41.    <sup>3</sup> *ibid.*, ii. 47.    <sup>4</sup> *ibid.*, v. 14.    <sup>5</sup> *ibid.*, vi. 7.

But, as was natural, this success had not been accomplished without strong opposition. The ruling party in Jerusalem, the High Priest and the unspiritual group of Sadducees who surrounded him, were bitterly opposed to the new teaching, based as it was on a doctrine of resurrection in which they had no belief. So long, however, as the teaching of the Apostles seemed to be consistent with loyalty to traditional Judaism, it was very difficult to suppress it. After all, there was a large Jewish party which did believe in a future resurrection, and the Jews as a whole were committed to the doctrine that a Christ, or Messiah, would come one day. It was hardly possible, therefore, to treat men as necessarily heretics because they asserted that Christ *had* come and *had* risen from the dead. But it was not long before the real meaning of Christianity began to emerge. The original Apostles were all Hebrews: that is to say, their homes were in Palestine and they spoke, not indeed the ancient Hebrew tongue, but a similar language called Aramaic. They were *conservative* Jews. But it will be remembered that the miracle of Pentecost took place on an occasion when there were Jews present from all over the world, and a large proportion of the first Christians had never lived in Palestine and did not speak Aramaic habitually but Greek, the language of the eastern part of the Roman Empire. They moved habitually among non-Jewish peoples and in a spiritual atmo-

sphere very different from that of the Temple worship of Jerusalem. They were known as Hellenists. These were the 'Grecians' who are mentioned several times in the Acts (the Revised Version calls them 'Grecian Jews'). They were *liberal* Jews. Now it was among these Grecian Jews that the truth first began to come out that Christ is the universal Saviour, and that His Church is a greater thing than a mere enlargement of the old Jewish Church. It is Christ Himself and not the earthly Temple who is the true dwelling-place of the Most High. This is the beginning of the Catholic conception of the Church. The Church henceforth is not to be the preserve of one single nation, but a home for all men.

It was such teaching as this, delivered most clearly by the brilliant young Hellenist, S. Stephen, which gave the High Priest and his set their opportunity. Stephen was stoned to death, and has ever since been honoured as the first martyr for our Lord.

His martyrdom contributed directly to the expansion of the Church. In the consequent persecution none but the Apostles remained in Jerusalem : and 'they that were scattered abroad went about preaching the word.'<sup>1</sup> Among such preachers one was conspicuous. The Apostles had recently laid their hands in Ordination on seven men, among whom were Stephen himself and Philip. It will be remembered that our

<sup>1</sup> Acts viii. 4 (R.V.).

Lord's charge to the Apostles had been that they should be His witnesses in Jerusalem, Judaea, Samaria, and the uttermost parts of the earth. It was Philip, the colleague of the far-seeing Stephen, who first set foot as an evangelist on the territory of the hated Samaritans. Immediately afterwards two of the Apostles proceeded to Samaria and confirmed the action of their subordinate by laying hands on Philip's converts that they might 'receive the Holy Ghost.' It is generally considered that this was the same action as we now call Confirmation. It was this same Philip who immediately afterwards took another initiative in baptizing the Ethiopian eunuch, who was no doubt of the class called 'God-fearers': not a full proselyte (not what we should call a naturalized Jew) but one sufficiently in touch with the Jewish Church to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and to study the scriptures with intelligence and care. Such a man would never have been admitted into full communion with Judaism: such admission was indeed forbidden by the law.<sup>1</sup> Philip's action shows how the borders of the Christian Church were being gradually widened.<sup>2</sup>

A further step was soon to be taken. S. Philip's action was that of a comparatively irresponsible evangelist. It was followed by a far more solemn and considered decision on the part of the acknowledged leader of the Church, S. Peter. Acting on a special divine revelation he deliber-

<sup>1</sup> Deut. xxiii. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Acts viii.



ately took a two days' journey from Joppa to Caesarea in order to give the good news to a Roman centurion who, like the Ethiopian, was a 'God-fearer.' In this case S. Peter's doubts were finally set aside by obvious tokens that the characteristic gift of Churchmanship—the gift of the Holy Spirit—had actually been bestowed upon Cornelius and his companions even though they had not been baptized. When God Himself had thus shown the path Peter could not but follow it; he proceeded to have the whole group baptized and so admitted to full outward membership in the Church. His action was criticized by old-fashioned Jewish members of the Church; but his defence was irrefragable: 'Who was I, that I could withstand God?'<sup>1</sup>

Only one further step remained to be taken. Up till now no one had been baptized who was not already an adherent of the Jewish religion, even though a certain number of the new converts were uncircumcised at the time of their conversion and therefore not within the Jewish covenant. It could still, therefore, be maintained by the old-fashioned that the Christian religion was simply the perfecting of Judaism, and that all Christians were as such obliged to keep the Jewish law. It was reserved for Paul, the ex-Pharisee, the persecutor of the Church, to break down the final barrier.

Almost alone among the early disciples S. Paul had really kept all the refinements with which

<sup>1</sup> Acts x. 1-xi. 18.

the Pharisees had embroidered the law. The very reason for which he had persecuted the Christians was that he saw beforehand that the Christian faith would certainly turn out to be a solvent of Jewish observances. After his sudden and miraculous conversion his reception by the Jewish Christians was less than cordial. For years it seemed as though there was no work waiting for him in the Christian Church. At last his opportunity came. One result of the persecution which followed on the death of Stephen was, as we have seen, a vast extension of missionary work. The Gospel spread as far as the great cosmopolitan city of Antioch and a general evangelization was set on foot. The word was preached not to Jews only but to Gentiles. Whether these were 'God-fearers' or not is not quite clear; but at all events it is certain that there was no attempt whatever to press them to keep the Jewish law.

This was S. Paul's chance. Invited by Barnabas to join in the work, he leapt at once into prominence, and already proved himself a champion of Gentile liberty.<sup>1</sup> Whatever may have been the past religious observance of the Antiochene converts, there can be no doubt about S. Paul's subsequent practice. Starting by special divine command on his great series of missionary journeys in which Antioch was the base, the same story is repeated again and again. He approaches first

<sup>1</sup> Acts xi. 19-26.

the Jews in each place which he visits. They reject his message and he turns to the Gentiles.<sup>1</sup> 'Gentiles' now means raw heathen. The principle for which Paul had to fight all his life through was that the Church was open to all ; and that there was no need to pass through the gate of Judaism. A heathen was as suitable a subject for conversion as one who had already learned to worship God as revealed by the Jewish law and prophecy. At last there is a Catholic Gospel, available for all men everywhere, springing indeed from Judaism but no longer tied to Jewish practices.

This Gospel of the Catholic Church was preached by S. Paul and his companions all over the Roman world, and the great story of the Acts of the Apostles comes to its climax when at long last it is preached in the capital of the Roman world, destined for many centuries to be the capital also of the Christian world—the mother-city of Rome.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *ibid.*, xiii and following chapters.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*, xxviii. 16-31.

## CHAPTER V

*THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE  
CHURCH*

For three hundred years always liable to persecution : this meant that the Christians of this period were for most part sincere. Constantine's conversion. Christianity becomes the established religion of the Roman Empire. Result— infection of the Church with a worldly spirit. In the East the Church too subservient to the Emperor. In the West growing power of the Papacy.

TO attempt to make a book of this kind contain a history of the Church would be ludicrous. All the same, something must be said to show how the Church of the twentieth century is really the same body as the Church of the Apostles.

The key to the problem is the fact that the Church is a *body*. Ideally, as we have seen, the Church is the Body of Christ, the visible embodiment of Christ upon earth. But, of course, this does *not* mean that the Church is perfect as Christ is. The actual Church is deeply infected with human sin and imperfection. So that when we say that she is a body, we mean not only that she grows and develops as all bodies must do, but also that *she*



*is subject to maladies*, to exhaustion, to corruption, to paralysis, even to amputation, like the bodies of the weak and sinful men and women of whom she is composed. But what she cannot lose is her union with Jesus Christ and her function of conforming the hearts and wills of her members to the heart and will of Christ, in so far as they themselves will do their part towards this end.

It is probably safe to assume that the purest period of Christian history is the earliest. This is not because we fancy there was some mythical golden age of Christianity in which the Church was perfect, and from which it has continuously declined. There were plenty of glaring faults among the early Christians: their theology was crude; their organization was elementary; their discipline was harsh. But they were a persecuted body, and therefore they were all in deadly earnest. At almost any moment in the first three hundred years of the story of the Christian Church any member of it was liable to torture and death. Unpopularity in this extreme form has bad effects on character as well as good. It does tend to make its victims fanatical and self-righteous, and it cannot be denied that there are signs of both these unpleasant characteristics in the early story of the Church; but the members of an unpopular body are at least sincere. One will hardly die for a faith in which one does not believe. Martyrdom means witness to the truth;

and the early Church was a community of potential martyrs. A cynic might call it a suicide club. All through the period every kind of perversion had to be fought within the Church: queer doctrinal aberrations which if left alone would have dethroned Christ from His unique supremacy; strange fanaticisms which would have discredited the sanity of the new religion; violent attempts to purify the Church by wholesale expulsions; too much love of power and too little charity. Yet when it came to the point the martyrs and confessors were ready, and Christ was not betrayed. There was no part of the Roman Empire without its Christians and without its martyrs.

During all this time the Christian Church maintained its unity without much machinery for doing so. More and more it came to be seen that the episcopate was the great bond of unity. The bishops found themselves to be not only the heads of their local churches, but members of a brotherhood through which the local churches became conscious of their unity within the one great Church. The individual bishop at home represented the universal Church to his own flock, but also when he met his fellow-bishops in council was able to represent the feelings and traditions of his diocese as a contribution to the consciousness and experience of the Church as a whole. This double function of the bishop was very obvious when a new bishop had to be appointed. He was chosen by

WOMAN'S AUXILIARY

SAN DIEGO CONVOCATION

those over whom he would have to bear rule; but before he could be consecrated as a bishop he would have to be accepted by the other bishops of the neighbourhood as a suitable person for the office. Otherwise he could not become a bishop at all; for no one is a bishop until he has been consecrated by other bishops as a member of the Episcopal Order.

The highly centralized position which the Pope (that is, the Bishop of Rome) afterwards assumed was not yet in existence. No doubt the central position of Rome as the capital of the Empire gave the Roman bishop a unique opportunity of pre-eminence. The fact that the two leading Apostles, S. Peter and S. Paul, had planted the Church in Rome gave that see an especial claim to the title 'Apostolic.' Little as is known of the early history of the Roman Church (that is, that part of the Christian Church which lived and worshipped in the city of Rome) we do find to a remarkable extent a kind of feeling that the Church and Bishop of Rome have a special responsibility which makes them apt to give advice, and sometimes something more than advice, to churches in different parts of the world. But the idea that every Christian is as such immediately subject to the jurisdiction of the Pope does not seem as yet to have risen above the horizon.

The first three centuries of the life of the Church are a record of alternate persecution and respite. But in spite of the persecutions the

Church continued to grow. By the beginning of the fourth century important places in the State and even in the Emperor's household were occupied by Christians. Every city in the civilized world (that is to say, the Roman Empire) had its large churches. In some places, as in Asia Minor, it is probable that Christians were actually in a majority. As always happens when the profession of Christianity is easy, a certain laxity and sloth, together with a quarrelsome spirit, began to appear. It was now that the last and most terrible of the persecutions burst upon the Church. The first ten years of the fourth century (more accurately the years 303 to 313) were the most severe time of testing which Christians had been called upon to endure. At one time it seemed as though it were almost true, in the words of a contemporary inscription, that the Emperor Diocletian had 'abolished the superstition of Christ.'

Political events brought persecution to an end. The rise of the Emperor Constantine brought about a reversal of policy, and by the Edict of Milan (A.D. 313) universal toleration was at last proclaimed. Another ten years had to pass before the edict was put in force everywhere. There were two Emperors, and it was only one of them who looked favourably on the Christian faith. But in A.D. 323 the defeat and death of the other Emperor left Constantine—now a convinced, if not always a very consistent,



Christian—in sole command. Almost immediately he made Christianity into something very like an ‘established’ religion.

The results of Constantine’s conversion were stupendous. From being a sect the members of which were liable to torture and death at any moment, the Church became one of the principal powers in secular life. Bishops and priests found themselves in positions of dignity and influence. The profession of Christianity brought with it temporal advantages. It cannot be pretended that the results were all to the good. Converts poured into the Church, too many of them from interested motives and without any real conversion either of mind or morals. Discipline decayed. Worldliness appeared in high places. Moreover, it is from this moment that we must date that disastrous confusion of the powers of the State with those of the Church which has done untold damage to the life of the spirit. The new position of the Emperor as the protector rather than the oppressor of the Church tended all too quickly to make the Church dependent on the secular arm. When the civil power was strong it was able to dictate the policy of the Church; when the Church was strong it was able to enforce the decisions of the hierarchy by an appeal to those forces which the State controlled.

For some centuries after the conversion of Constantine the principal seat of civil government was in the East, at Constantine’s new and

gorgeous capital of Constantinople. It was therefore in the East that these pernicious results were chiefly felt. In the West the mantle of the Caesars fell to a large and ever increasing extent upon the shoulders of the Pope as Bishop of Rome, the ancient centre of government. By this time that primacy and authority which had always been conceded to the Roman See was based more and more explicitly on the theory that the Pope was the successor of S. Peter, and this claim in turn was more and more made to imply a jurisdiction far in excess of any that S. Peter himself had ever wielded. The Roman Empire in the West became continually more shadowy, until it disappeared altogether. When at last, in the year 800, it was revived in the person of Charlemagne, the Emperor, though nominally Roman, ceased to have any intimate connection with the Eternal City, and, in spite of much rivalry between Pope and Emperor, in which the Pope by no means always gained the upper hand, it was never possible for the Emperor to bring the Pope into quite that subjection in which the Patriarch of Constantinople came to be held by the rival Emperor of the East.

## CHAPTER VI

*HOW THE CHURCH CAME TO  
BRITAIN*

Origin of early British Church unknown. Scotland : S. Ninian. Ireland : S. Columba. Heathen invasion of England. Missions of S. Augustine and S. Aidan. Controversy between Roman and Celtic forms of Churchmanship.

THE origins of Christianity in Britain are very obscure. There is a legend that Joseph of Arimathea visited the West of England ; but not much stress can be laid on this. It must be remembered that Britain was occupied by the Romans continuously for five hundred years. At some time during that period the Christian faith must somehow have filtered in. We have evidence that it had taken firm root by the third century. Early in the fourth century we find that British bishops were summoned to a Church Council at Arles in the South of France. This makes it clear that the British Church was thought of as part of the One Catholic Church. It was not a separate and independent body. About the same time Britain gave her first martyr, S. Alban, to our Lord.

A little later Christianity spread to Scotland. The great name in this connection is S. Ninian, a native of Cumberland or of Galloway, who, after studying the faith in Rome and being consecrated as a bishop, built his famous church called Candida Casa (the White Building) at Whithern and preached the Gospel over a great part of Scotland. Ireland seems to have received the Gospel about the same time, and later on (in the sixth century) the Irish Church was to enrich the West of Scotland by the labours of many missionaries. The greatest of these was S. Columba, whose monastery at Iona proved a veritable seed-bed of missionary endeavour.

Meanwhile, however, the Roman garrisons had withdrawn from Britain, and the more accessible parts of the country were left at the mercy of invaders. Jutes, Angles, and Saxons, all of them heathen, swarmed into the country, and the Christian Britons were driven into the far West. There they survived, in Wales and Cornwall and West Devon, few in numbers and oppressed by poverty, while the rest of the country as far as the Firth of Forth was given over to the heathen invaders. England had to be converted afresh.

This second conversion (which of course was the first conversion of the heathen tribes who were now in possession of the country) was initiated by the great Pope Gregory. The King of Kent had married a Christian princess, and to that extent the ground was prepared.



Gregory's own enthusiasm had been kindled by the sight of English slave-boys in the streets of Rome. He was so struck by their fair-haired beauty that he exclaimed, according to the well-known story, that they were not Angles (that is, English) but angels. In the year 597 S. Augustine with forty monks landed at Richborough and was received by the King. After a few months the King himself was converted and baptized, and the Christian Church had been planted anew on English soil.

It must not, however, be supposed that the whole of England owed its conversion to S. Augustine's mission. He was indeed the founder of the great See of Canterbury which has ever since held the leading place among most English-speaking Christians; but progress after his death and that of his royal patron was slow, and there were many setbacks. Nor did newcomers get much welcome from the remnant of the old British Church. The things that separated them were too trivial for words, being concerned with the way in which the clergy shaved their heads and the date on which they observed Easter. But there was a total lack of sympathy between them. The newcomers from Rome thought, with some justice, that the British Church with its tribal peculiarities was somewhat fossilized. No doubt there was also some truth in the accusation that the missionaries from Rome showed a certain lack of Christian humility.

In any case the fact remains that the re-conversion of England owed nothing directly to the remnant of the ancient British Church. The permanent conversion of the north and centre of England was not due to Canterbury or Wales or Cornwall but to Iona. The missionary labours of S. Columba were now to bear fruit, and under the inspiration of the great bishop, S. Aidan, the Christian faith was established in Northumbria.

The Iona missionaries naturally observed the Celtic customs in regard to the date of Easter and the tonsure and the form of the liturgy; and, religious human nature being what it is, some clash of controversy was inevitable. Little by little, however, common sense prevailed and England fell into line with the general customs of the Church. No doubt the immense prestige of Rome had much to do with this result: indeed on one crucial occasion the matter seems to have been decided by a somewhat crude appeal to the authority of S. Peter: but it is nevertheless clear that the decision was a wise one. Celtic Christianity produced many saints and many missionaries, but it centred entirely on the monastic system; and wonderful as the results of monasticism have been in the production of both saints and missionaries, for ordinary and stabilized pastoral efficiency it cannot be compared with the machinery of dioceses and parishes which was now to be set up all over England.

## CHAPTER VII

*WHY THE CHURCH IS DISUNITED :  
(A) SEPARATION OF EAST AND WEST*

Quarrelsomeness of human nature not removed by Christianity. Early divisions. The great division between the Eastern and Western parts of the Church ('Orthodox' and 'Catholics').

WE cannot follow up the history of the Church, but the question which stands at the head of this chapter must be faced, and the answer to it is an historical one.

Fallen human nature is opinionative, supercilious, and quarrelsome; and unfortunately these characteristics do not at once disappear when men accept the Christian faith. From the first beginnings of Church history there have been disagreements about doctrine and about morals and about discipline and about forms of worship and about Church government. Even in the scanty outline which we have already drawn this has been only too obvious. We read of disputes even between the Apostles; S. Peter, S. Paul, and S. Barnabas were all involved in them. There was sharp disagreement between the old-fashioned Jewish Christians and the more liberal Gentile ones. We saw the

same thing in the early history of the Church in Britain. In both of these cases and in very many others the disputes were healed, and no permanent division resulted. But the results were not always so happy. There have been too many disputes in the history of the Church which have resulted in divisions which resist all attempts at appeasement.

People sometimes talk as though the Church remained perfectly at one for about a thousand years and then suddenly split into two. This is very far from the truth. The doctrinal disputes which rent the Church from a time immediately after the conversion of Constantine resulted again and again in large numbers of Christians separating themselves from the main body and organizing themselves as separate and independent groups. There was always a theological excuse, a disagreement on some doctrinal point which seemed so important that compromise was impossible. Sometimes the excuse was valid enough; but too often we seem to see that the two parties did not even want to be reconciled. National pride entered into the matter, or the scorn of the intellectual for the simple-minded, or the bitterness of the devotee against the spirit of criticism. These things made for contention and extinguished charity, and each side so exaggerated its own point of view that no agreement was any longer possible.

Again and again the same story is repeated



in those early centuries. A dispute arises; passions are inflamed; a Council is called to settle the matter; the Council comes to a decision; but the quarrel goes on. In the end it sometimes happens that the Church as a whole sees that one side was right and the other wrong; but by no means always. Several of these disputes have never really been cleared up. After at least two of the early General Councils the Christians of large geographical areas separated from the main body of the Church, and the scanty remnants of them still live in separation, even though it would be difficult to express in words wherein exactly the difference consists.

The most serious wound of this sort which has ever afflicted the Church was the split or 'schism' between the 'Catholics' and the 'Orthodox' in the eleventh century. This was a division between the Westerns, who followed the Pope, and the Easterns, whose leader was the Patriarch of Constantinople. Of course both sides considered themselves to be actually both Catholic and Orthodox; but these are the words by which Westerns and Easterns respectively chose to describe themselves.

East and West were constantly quarrelling for almost six centuries before the final rupture. There were no doubt faults on both sides; in the West the continual aggrandisement of the Pope, in the East the fatal subservience of the Church to the political schemes of the Emperor.

But besides this the two chief portions of the civilized world were growing away from each other in character. The West was at first continually being overrun by barbarian tribes, who destroyed its culture and cut short the boundaries of the Empire. Rome itself was sacked three times in the course of sixty-two years. The Popes represented the only force of law and order. It was a Pope who called in Charlemagne to restore the authority of civilized government in the West. Soon we enter the Dark Ages during which the papacy and the whole of Roman society was plunged in deep moral degradation. When, in the eleventh century, the moral atmosphere began to improve, the antagonism between East and West had reached its height. If the East despised the West as a crew of uncultured barbarians, the West was equally scornful of the effeminacy and sycophancy of the Orientals.

As time went on, new causes of dispute were discovered. The Westerns had added a new clause to the Creed. They used unleavened bread in the Eucharist. The Western clergy were supposed to be celibates, while the Easterns married before ordination unless they were monks. There was also that curious dispute as to the proper way of shaving the head which had caused so much trouble in Britain in the sixth century. But probably the deepest cause was the struggle for pre-eminence. The East would never admit the papal claim to universal

jurisdiction by divine right: the West would have none of the determination of the Eastern Emperor to extend the powers of his puppet patriarch as an instrument of statecraft. So at last the great tragedy of the Catholic Church was consummated. East and West fell apart, and this time there was no reconciliation.

It is a schism which has now lasted for almost nine hundred years, and it can hardly be said that it shows many signs of being healed, except indeed—and this is of vast importance—that uncharitableness has been wonderfully abated. The tone of the East is as different from that of the West as ever it was; but men are coming nearer to the idea that after all it is possible that each may have something to teach the other. The real stumbling-block is the position of the Pope. To the Roman Catholic he is by divine right the supreme Head of the Church on earth. The Eastern Orthodox will not concede this, and as long as it is claimed he will pay no attention whatever to the papal claims. But it must not be thought that the Easterns are utterly opposed to the existence of the papacy. If it were not for the phrase 'divine right' many of the Orthodox would be ready to welcome a very real primacy and universal authority in the Roman See.

## CHAPTER VIII

*WHY THE CHURCH IS DISUNITED :  
(B) THE CHURCH IN ENGLAND*

Separation of English Church from Rome. No new Church set up. Continuity of the Church during its Reformation. Contrast in this respect with foreign Protestantism. The Puritans. Some wished to make the English Church Calvinistic and Presbyterian ; others set up Independent Congregations. Methodism. Establishment.

THE breach between Rome and Constantinople is not, however, the matter which most concerns us in this country. We have to go on to a point which is far more important for us. How is it that the Church in Great Britain, which in old days owed so much to Rome and so completely acknowledged her spiritual leadership, is now so entirely separated from the Roman Church?

It is a tangled story, and only the briefest account of it can be given here. By the end of the Middle Ages the Church had become corrupt in various ways, as is acknowledged on all sides. Some of the Popes were actually living immoral lives. The spiritual influence which in older days had been so conspicuous a mark of papal rule had largely disappeared,



and the political and ecclesiastical power of the papacy was very largely employed as a means of extorting money from the Church at large. There was a considerable amount of profitable superstition. There were enormous numbers of clergymen, but the general standard of spiritual life was low. The great revival of learning which took place at the end of the fifteenth century began to open men's eyes to the fact that all was not well with the Church. A reformation of some sort was inevitable.

The form it actually took, so far as England was concerned, depended almost entirely on the personal will of the Sovereign who happened to occupy the throne. Under Henry VIII the Church was brought completely under royal domination. Henry was no Protestant. He had actually received the title of 'Defender of the Faith' from the Pope as a reward for writing a book against Martin Luther. But the disgusting business of his matrimonial affairs brought him into conflict with Rome, and the latter part of his reign witnessed the extraordinary spectacle of some men being burnt for Protestantism, while others were being beheaded for Popery. Henry had proclaimed himself 'Supreme Head of the Church,' and to refuse to acknowledge this apparently blasphemous title was tantamount to high treason.

The boy King Edward VI is an exception to the rule that the manner of the English Reformation was determined by the personal

will of the monarch. It was the Council who managed things for this short period; and their management was entirely self-seeking and unscrupulous. They found it to their advantage to throw in their lot with the extreme Protestantism which filtered in from Holland, Germany, Switzerland, and France. This process was brought to an end abruptly by the accession of Mary. The new Queen had a great opportunity, but she threw it away. Her policy, supported by all the cruelty characteristic of the time, was purely reactionary. She wished to restore the old régime of Papal Catholicism as it had existed before the quarrel of Henry with the Pope. In so doing, during the years of her brief reign she inspired the English people with that horror of Rome and all its ways which has lasted to the present day, and divided her subjects as they had never been divided before. At her death a sigh of relief went up. At least there would be no more burnings.

The long reign of Elizabeth is critical in more ways than one. She was not a specially religious woman; she was interested in religion, but her first interest was patriotism. England must be safe, England must be great, and England must be English. Brought up as a 'Protestant' (which strictly speaking means a Lutheran, but was freely used to mean any person who accepted the revolt against Rome) she was not likely to let the country remain in submission to the overbearing government of the

Roman See. Nor would her genuine patriotism permit her to allow England to be dictated to by Spain. But she had no love for the advanced Reformers. She disliked their presumption and distrusted their political influence. Neither the austerity nor the drabness of Puritanism appealed to her flamboyant taste. But above all she wished to have one Church of the English people, and was willing to go far in order to comprise within it as many as it was capable of containing. Allowing for the difference in date, her attitude was not unlike that of her father Henry. She was determined to maintain as far as possible the continuity with the pre-Reformation Church. She abandoned the compromising title of Supreme Head of the Church. She would gladly have kept the bishops of Mary's reign in possession of their sees if only they would have accepted her position as '*Supreme Governor* of this realm in all spiritual or ecclesiastical things or causes.' She insisted on a Prayer Book with an order which was based on the ancient Catholic forms. She refused to initiate a quarrel with the Pope.

The result was not all that she desired. The majority of the clergy in the end accepted her will, but the bishops stood out against it. The mass of the people were in reaction against the extreme Romanism of Mary's reign, and many of the most zealously religious leaned strongly to the extreme Protestantism of the Continent. It must be remembered that not a few of them

had been in exile in Holland and there had learned to reject the whole of the traditional ideas of Churchmanship. It was an unstable position and few people can have been surprised when, after eleven years of it, the Pope lost patience and declared the Queen to be a heretic.

That was bad enough ; for it meant that all who looked to the Pope for leadership had to break off communion with the English Church. There was henceforward a complete breach between the English and the Roman Churches, and once more the holy Body of Christ suffered the wound of disunion. But to make matters worse, the Pope also declared the Queen to be deposed, and absolved her subjects from their allegiance. This was in 1570. The result might have been foreseen. The breach was not only religious but political. Plots were fomented against the Queen's life, and it was not long before Romanism became tantamount to treason. That is the explanation of the persecution of Romanists which began in Elizabeth's reign and has left traces in the laws of England until the present day. The joint result of the Marian and the Elizabethan persecutions has been to embitter relations between English Romanists and members of the English Church for all this long period. The Marian persecution was more acute and less justifiable ; but the persecution which began under Elizabeth went on much longer and has had even more permanent effects.



The separation between Roman and Anglican Churchmen was not the only division brought about by the Reformation. This separation was one between two bodies which each maintained the ancient essential tokens and securities of the life of the Catholic Church. The Roman Church had superimposed an autocracy upon the ancient graded authoritative system of the Church. It had also no doubt allowed moral discipline to become slack and had been too indulgent to superstition. But in all this there was nothing to destroy the historical fact of its continuity with the Church of the Apostles. So likewise the English Church, when it became conscious of itself as a component part of the Church Universal, even though separated from the central See of Rome, never supposed that it was coming into being as a new Church. It maintained the ancient and necessary structure of the ministry—bishops, priests, and deacons—and insisted that the only person with authority to continue the ministry was a person who had been empowered to do so, namely, a bishop. It maintained, though with considerable alterations, the custom of having an ordered liturgical form for all public services. It insisted on the due ministration of the Sacraments. There was continuity. No one can point to any moment when a new Church was set up as a rival to the old one. The Church of England is the same Church which was brought to our shores by Augustine and Aidan. It found itself com-

pelled to withdraw its allegiance from the Pope, and in so doing lost many of its children ; but it is the old Church and not a new one.

At the same period the Reformation was having other and less happy effects. It must always be remembered that foreign Protestantism stood for a root-and-branch alteration of the system of the Church. Luther attached no importance to the succession of the Christian ministry through the line of bishops. Calvin, the leader of the more extreme reformers, thought episcopacy to be positively wrong and unscriptural. Both Luther and Calvin adopted a form of teaching which denied the freedom of the human will, and Calvin definitely taught that the majority of the human race were predestinated to eternal damnation. The Christian communities which sprang up under such leadership were clearly in no sense continuous with the ancient Church. They were newly-formed bodies, with new doctrines and new forms of worship. While the English Church can rightly claim to be a reformed portion of the ancient Catholic Church, the Lutherans and Calvinists can hardly make such a claim.

During the persecution under Mary many devout Christians had been compelled to leave England for Switzerland or Germany and had absorbed a strong tincture of foreign thorough-going Protestantism. They had, indeed, at first no great objection to episcopacy as such, so long as the bishops did not interfere with them ; but

what they wanted was the establishment in England of the whole Calvinist system. They were violently opposed to the very modest amount of ceremonial which was all that the Elizabethan bishops attempted to enforce. They held in particular abhorrence the sign of the Cross, the matrimonial ring, the custom of kneeling to receive Holy Communion. As time went on the Puritan movement developed in two different directions. The more impatient and zealous devotees began to separate themselves from the Church altogether, setting up their own conventicles as purely private societies for worship and preaching. These were the ancestors of the Congregationalists of the present day, and other similar bodies. But at first most of the Puritan party devoted their energies to trying to assimilate the Church of England as closely as possible to the Genevan model. Their desire was to abolish all set forms of prayer, to emphasize the importance of preaching in preference to other parts of the service, to get rid of episcopal authority in favour of Presbyterianism, and to establish the Calvinistic doctrine of absolute predestination. Such men had no idea of founding new religious bodies. What they wanted was to transform the ancient Church of England into something more like their idea of the primitive Church. They left their mark upon the Church of England, but they never attained their desire of destroying the Catholic tradition. At one time, during the

latter years of the reign of Charles I, it seemed as though they were on the point of success ; but the advent of Cromwell with his army of Independents (Congregationalists as we should call them to-day) balked them of their prize. For some years indeed the Church was driven underground. Certainly many Presbyterians were intruded into English parishes, but it was Independency and not Presbyterianism which was in the ascendent. With the return of Charles II from exile the Presbyterians found themselves for the most part expelled from the Church, and English Presbyterianism began to fade away, finally lapsing into Unitarianism in the following century.

That is not to say that the Church of England absorbed the whole of the English people. The fiction that it did so was for a time maintained, until the accession of a Dutch Calvinist to the British throne made the situation ridiculous. But experience seems to show that the Presbyterian polity really needs establishment, or at least the favour of the State, before it can flourish ; and the non-episcopal communities in England which have survived from the seventeenth century are Congregationalist in character.<sup>1</sup> While the Presbyterians had wished to reform the Church, the 'Brownists' or Independents, or, as we should now say, the Congregationalists, thought the existing Church to

<sup>1</sup> It should be observed the Baptist form of Church government is of the Congregationalist type.



be beyond reformation. The Lord's people were to organize themselves as best they could in little groups or congregations. No unworthy members could be tolerated and there could be no connection with the State. With the gradual emergence of the idea of tolerance these bodies have come out into the open and become powerful and influential. While in theory maintaining the idea that each separate congregation is an independent Church, they have in practice evolved into a more or less homogeneous community, in which the stable existence of any particular congregation depends to a great extent upon recognition by the general body.

The other great non-episcopal type of Christianity in England, and also on a far greater scale in America, is that of Methodism. The founder of the Methodist system was John Wesley, but it is important to remember that he never wished his society to separate from the English Church. To speak of Methodism as non-episcopal is no doubt to beg a question, for until recently a large proportion of American Methodists styled themselves Episcopal, and to-day the government of the principal American body of Methodists is episcopalian. In England, however, the Methodists have never adopted any form of episcopacy; while in America, although the 'bishop' is given very considerable executive authority, he hardly claims to be a bishop in the same sense as one

who stands in the line of episcopal succession. He is a superintendent minister rather than a member of a distinctive order in the ministry.

Such, in very bare outline, is the position in England to-day. The Church of England is the same Church which has preached the Gospel and administered the Sacraments ever since the coming of Augustine and Aidan. At the Reformation it reformed itself, getting rid of many abuses but also of much that was useful and laudable. But it never lost its continuity. To say that Henry VIII founded a new Church simply shows a complete ignorance of history. But part of the necessary process of purging at the time of the Reformation was a refusal to accept the far-reaching and exaggerated claims of the Roman See. For this reason there came about a separation between the main body of the English Church and those who still maintained their allegiance to Rome. The latter are those whom we now call *Roman Catholics*. Though not nearly so numerous as the nominal adherents of the Church of England, they are a very large body; and although there is a considerable leakage they are not burdened with the vast numbers of purely nominal members who are so great a weakness to the Church of England.

The Church of England is 'established.' All that this necessarily means is that it is recognized by the State as the official Church. That is all that the 'Establishment' of Presbyterianism

carries with it in Scotland. In England, however, it means a good deal more. On the one hand, the Archbishop of Canterbury has the right of crowning the King, and a large proportion of the bishops have seats in the House of Lords. But, on the other hand, the Church of England is much hampered by State regulation. The State claims the right to give or refuse assent to any alteration in its forms of worship. The Crown (that is, in practice, the Prime Minister) nominates its bishops and deans and the canons in many cathedral churches. It is for this reason that the non-established religious bodies in England style themselves the *Free Churches*. The State does not interfere with them. Of course, in a civilized community no one can be altogether free from State interference. The mere fact that a religious body holds property at once makes it liable to *some* interference on the part of the State. Neither the Free Churches nor the Freemasons can snap their fingers at the State. But on the whole their pride in their relative freedom is justified. The position of the Established Church in relation to the State is very difficult to defend. But the claim of the English Church on the allegiance of the people of England does not rest on the fact of Establishment, but on the fact that it represents in England the Church Universal or Catholic. Its clergy have been duly ordained by bishops who are in the line of succession from the Apostles. Its doctrines are those which have been main-

tained by the whole Church throughout the ages. It has been excommunicated by the Pope; but it has never voluntarily broken away from the original Church as founded by our Lord.

It is on this ground that, in common with the rest of the Catholic Church, it claims that men are not free to choose their own religious allegiance. Christ built a Church as He said He would, and if that Church can be found it is man's *duty* to belong to it. In England there are only two bodies who with any confidence can show continuity with the original Church. As between these two—the Roman and the Anglican—which both can and do claim continuity, men must choose according as they think that Christ did or did not constitute His Church to be an absolute monarchy.



## CHAPTER IX

*WHY THE CHURCH IS DISUNITED :  
(C) THE CHURCH IN SCOTLAND,  
WALES, AND IRELAND*

The Reformation in Scotland. Complete overthrow of Catholic system and banishment of bishops. Restoration of a true episcopate under James VI and again under Charles II. Under William III Episcopal Church disestablished and afterwards persecuted. Few in numbers, yet rightful claim to be the Catholic Church in Scotland. Two other disestablished Churches: Wales and Ireland. Meaning of the word 'Anglican.'

IN Scotland there is a very different story to tell, and in consequence a very different state of affairs at the present time. It must always be remembered that the Scottish Reformation took place before the union of the two kingdoms. In Scotland the Reformation consisted in the complete overthrow of the old Church and the setting up of a totally different organization with a new form of ministry.

It must be stated very clearly that the ancient Church of Scotland had fallen into terrible corruption. The bishops for the most part were completely worldly, often immoral, and utterly out of touch with the people. Their one idea

of the way to deal with false teaching was to burn the teacher alive. The monasteries were full of corruption.

The Scottish Reformation was to a very large extent the work of one man—John Knox. Unrest had been seething for years, and attempts at a reformation of the ancient Church, notably on the part of Archbishop Hamilton of St. Andrews, came too late. Only a leader was needed, and as soon as Knox appeared upon the scene it was clear that the ancient Scottish Catholic Church was doomed. Neither the Regent, Mary of Guise, nor Mary Queen of Scots, nor all the established prestige of the hierarchy could save the situation. The nobles were longing to lay their hands on the enormous wealth of the Church; the common people were inflamed with fanatical hatred for the old order; and the forces of conservatism were rendered impotent by the infamy of their reputed leaders. An orgy of destruction and pillage wiped the country clear of all traces of Catholicism.

This is not the place to follow up the complicated history of Scottish religion. At first titular 'bishops' (that is, ministers holding the title of bishop but not having been consecrated to the sacred Order of Bishops) were set up to occupy the vacant sees and draw the revenues. Often, however, the revenues did not remain in their possession, since they had only received office under promise to pay a large proportion

of them to some influential layman. Then under the influence of Andrew Melville the Presbyterian form of government was set up. Later, on the initiative of James VI (in England 'James I'), the titular bishops were restored, and a few years later three of them were sent to England to receive episcopal consecration. Thus the hierarchy was restored and Scottish Christianity was once more united to the Catholic Church.

The arrangement was upset again by the tragic events of the reign of Charles I. The King was probably in too much of a hurry to restore the full tone of Catholic worship in a country which had conceived a violent hatred of it. Be that as it may, his introduction of liturgical worship was the signal for revolt, and the bishops were driven from the country. On the restoration of Charles II as King the bishops were likewise restored, and further consecrations took place in England to repair the broken chain of episcopal succession. Unfortunately religion was, as usual, mixed with politics; and in those days politics meant ruthless war against your adversary. The spirit of tolerance was hardly in existence. Charles II, that easy-going man, hated religious persecution, but he had few sympathizers. Persecution on one side, plots and rebellions on the other, kept Scotland in a ferment, and neither side has any cause to be proud of the record of religion during these stormy years.

After the Revolution William III was not unwilling to grant toleration. Himself a Dutch Calvinist, he was in natural sympathy with the Presbyterians ; but if the Episcopalians had been willing to accept him as King he would probably have afforded them at least a measure of protection. As it was, their consciences forbade them to do so. They had sworn allegiance to King James, and felt themselves unable to transfer their allegiance without perjury. As a result they were thrown to the wolves, and the Episcopalian clergy were deprived of their benefices. It must not be thought that the Scottish people as a whole desired the abolition of episcopacy. It seems that at first less than a third of the people were willing to take part in Presbyterian worship. In the south there is no doubt that the people were fanatically Presbyterian, and enjoyed to the utmost the 'outing' of the hated Episcopalians. But in the rest of Scotland the story is very different. In many places Episcopalian worship went on in spite of the Government, and it needed a heavy hand to put it down. But, rightly or wrongly, Episcopalians were deeply involved in the movement of 1715 for the restoration of the Stuart line ; and this gave the Government the opportunity they wanted for the suppression of the religion which had supported what was accounted rebellion.

A century of this treatment reduced the Episcopal Church to what Sir Walter Scott, himself an Episcopalian, called 'the shadow of



a shade.’<sup>1</sup> But it ought to be clear that if our contention is true that episcopacy is an essential feature of the Church we must not be led into thinking that either numbers or influence, still less political power, give to Presbyterianism the right to call itself ‘The Church of Scotland.’ That of course is the official name of the Established Church, and it would be discourteous to withhold it ; but in actual fact our principles oblige us to believe that having abolished the Catholic form of the ministry it lacks something which is necessary to membership in the organized Body of Christ. The real difference between the Episcopal Church and the Established Church is not that one uses a liturgy and the other specially composed prayers ; but that one is joined to the rest of the Catholic Church by the episcopate and the other is not. As between Episcopalian and Papal Catholics the matter must be settled in accordance with our judgement as to the rightful position of the Pope.

Something must be said about the history of the Reformation in Wales and in Ireland.

‘If the chief mark of the English Reformation was its conservatism, and of the Scottish its Protestantism, the Church in Wales was

<sup>1</sup> With the gradual removal of the penal laws against the Episcopal Church a revival has taken place ; and at this time the actual communicants of the Church number something over 62,000, with about an equal number of loosely attached adherents. The Roman Church is strong in some of the big cities, though the larger number of its members are of the Irish race.

reformed by robbery.' <sup>1</sup> Before the Reformation the Welsh Church was served chiefly by monastic priests, and when Henry VIII dissolved the monasteries the Welsh Church found itself impoverished to a far greater degree than the English. The extreme poverty of the parochial clergy had a depressing effect which extended well into the eighteenth century.

Two Welsh bishops are interesting as exhibiting the continuity of the Church in England and Wales. Kitchen, Bishop of Llandaff, was consecrated in 1545. That was just before the death of Henry VIII. He must therefore have been consecrated according to the mediaeval Latin rite which was still used at that date, and must have celebrated the Eucharist according to the Latin Missal. He retained his see all through the reigns of Edward VI and Mary, and still held it at his death four years after the accession of Elizabeth. A similar case is that of Bishop Barlow, also consecrated in the reign of Henry VIII. He, it is true, was deprived by Queen Mary; but after Elizabeth's accession he was released from prison and took the principal part in consecrating Archbishop Parker who succeeded to the see of Canterbury after the death of Cardinal Pole.

In the eighteenth century the Welsh Church was in a scandalous condition. The Hanoverian Government, jealous for English supremacy and

<sup>1</sup> W. H. Hutton, *A Short History of the Church in Great Britain*.

nervous about the stability of the dynasty, supplied a succession of English bishops who enriched themselves with the revenues of their sees, completely neglected their pastoral duties, and filled Welsh benefices with English-speaking clergymen. In these circumstances it is not surprising that the Church was completely ineffective and religion fell to a low ebb. The result was that when the Methodist Movement made itself felt in Wales, it carried all before it; and soon after the beginning of the nineteenth century the new converts drifted away from the Church and formed the sect of Calvinistic Methodists. The Church became a minority, and the revival in the latter half of the century came too late to reverse the process. It was not unnatural that the Welsh people as a whole were enthusiastic for Disestablishment and finally obtained it. The results have been surprising even to the most optimistic Churchman. As a new province of the Catholic Church, disencumbered of the shackles of the State connection, the ancient Church of Wales has gained new vitality and prestige, and is perhaps more vigorous than at any other period of its history. But it is probable that a majority of professing Christians in Wales are still attached to non-episcopal communities.

In Ireland the large majority of the population are Roman Catholics. The Church of Ireland is a small Episcopal Church in communion with the Church of England and

holding the same general principles. In externals this Church resembles the extreme 'Low Church' wing of the Church of England. This is to be accounted for by the fact that it was disestablished, and so set free to produce its own canon law, at a moment when almost all ecclesiastical dignitaries were greatly alarmed at the trend of the Oxford Movement in England. In consequence the newly liberated Church proceeded to bind itself by a series of new canons to an almost complete absence of any kind of ceremonial. We must remember, however, that where a Church can show continuity, orthodoxy, and a true episcopate, the mere absence of the usual ceremonial trappings does not destroy her claim to be a part of the Catholic Church.

All these Churches, together with many others throughout the world, are known as 'Anglican.' It is obvious that this word has some connection with 'English'; but it is equally obvious that these bodies are not parts of the Church of England, and are indeed completely independent of it. The Anglican Churches are those which have in some sense grown from the English Church since its separation from Rome. The English Church itself is, as we have seen, the same Church as was planted in England by Augustine and Aidan. The same kind of continuity can be traced in Wales where the Church was for centuries simply a part of the Province of Canterbury. In Ireland the case is almost the same; until the passing



of the Irish Disestablishment Act the Church of England and the Church of Ireland were officially a 'United Church.' In Scotland things are somewhat different. Before the Reformation constant attempts were made to include the Scottish Church within the Province of York, or else of Canterbury; but these attempts were always resisted, and for a century before the Reformation Scotland had its own archbishops. Afterwards the succession of bishops was twice broken, and had to be renewed from England; but it was never again suggested that the Scottish Church was part of the English. (Scottish Presbyterians commonly refer to the Scottish Episcopal Church as 'the English Church,' but seldom without a protest on the part of its members.) The Churches of the Dominions, though independent, have grown directly out of the English Church; but the Episcopal Church of the United States, though originally consisting for the most part of members of the English Church, derives its episcopate from Scotland.<sup>1</sup> To these must be added as 'Anglican' the missionary Churches which have sprung from older Churches, some from England, some from Scotland, some from Ireland, some from

<sup>1</sup> The British Government always refused to allow a bishop to be consecrated for the American colonies. After the Declaration of Independence the position was still more difficult. The Established Church would have had to insist on an oath of allegiance which no American citizen could take. In these circumstances Samuel Seabury appealed to the Scottish bishops, and received consecration from them.

America. All these have a close connection with each other. They hold the same general idea of Churchmanship. They are possessed of the threefold ministry of bishops, priests, and deacons. They decline the autocratic government of the Pope. They are in full communion with each other ; that is to say, any member of any of these Churches is at liberty to communicate at the altar of any other. In some sense they all look to Canterbury as a centre of unity ; and in practice they are held together by the invitation issued every ten years by the archbishop of that see to a conference of bishops at his palace of Lambeth. They contain many varieties of worship and their doctrinal standards often seem unduly elastic ; but they are a wonderful exhibition of the possibility of union in spite of much diversity, and make it clear to all the world that such union does not depend on external uniformity.

## CHAPTER X

*WORSHIP*

Worship = worth-ship. How much is God worth to us ? We cannot worship God as He deserves : only our Lord, Who is human as well as divine, could do that. Our Lord in His human nature is the true and perfect Worshipper, and He carries on this worship of God through the Church which is His Body. This worship is specially offered in the Eucharist, in which Christ is really present. But in the Eucharist Christ not only offers worship as Man, but also receives our worship as God. The Real Presence. Reservation.

**W**ORSHIP is 'worth-ship.' Divine worship is an attempt to express the worth or worthiness of God. Correspondingly, to say that the Mayor is 'right worshipful' means that we recognize his worth as a civic officer. When the bridegroom says to the bride that he worships her with his body, he means that he will reverence her womanly honour. People sometimes ask whether we ought to worship the saints. The only possible answer is, 'It depends what you mean by worship.' It would be wrong to adore them as if they were God, but it would also be wrong to refuse them the honour due to God's highest handiwork.

Our concern in this chapter is with the wor-

ship of God. What is God worth? The answer is that He is of infinite worth, and that no mere creature can give Him adequate worship. But even with the finite powers of humanity it ought to be possible to give Him the worship which is within those powers. That is the worship of the full and complete offering of ourselves, soul and body, to His service. Less than this we cannot offer without frustrating the whole purpose of our creation. We come from God, we belong to God. God has made us for Himself, and the heart finds no rest until it finds rest in Him.

It *ought* to be possible for man to give himself wholly to God, but the tragedy of life is that that is just what sinful man cannot do. He can make an effort to do it; he can even achieve a partial success; but he cannot worship God as he ought to do. 'All have sinned and *come short of the glory of God.*'<sup>1</sup>

But there is One who worshipped, and still worships, God as He deserves to be worshipped. When God the Son became Man He took into Himself a full and perfect Manhood. He Himself is God; but the Manhood which He made His own is *true* Humanity. Therefore its highest activity is the worship of God. Jesus Christ is God and Man. As God He receives worship; but as Man He offers it. All through His human life, which began in the womb of His Mother and continues for ever at the right

<sup>1</sup> Rom. iii. 23.



hand of the Father, He was and is giving Himself up completely to fulfil the divine will. Everything which He did, or said, or thought, or suffered, was offered to God in perfect obedience. This is the perfection of worship, and in the case of Christ, whose Personality is actually divine, it was not only perfect but complete and adequate. This worship of God reached its climax first when in utter obedience He gave Himself to the death of the Cross, and secondly when in all the glory of His risen life He presented Himself to God and laid His triumph at His feet.

But this worship which Christ offers in His humanity is continued by His Church both on earth and in heaven. The Church, as we have seen, is the 'Body of Christ.' What He is perfectly, it is imperfectly but truly. Because the Church is united to Christ, all the obedience and homage which it offers is acceptable and accepted for His sake. We, who make up the Church on earth, have been cleansed from the guilt and power of sin, and if we will but offer to God ourselves, all we do and all we are, in union with the perfect obedience and self-offering of Christ, God accepts us. Our worship is imperfect, but God can take the will for the deed if it is offered in the Name of Christ.

That is very wonderful, but there is something more wonderful still. At the Last Supper our Lord offered His own perfect life in sacrifice for us and commanded His Apostles to

repeat His mysterious action at the supper-table as long as the world should last. He promised that the consecrated Bread should be in truth His Body and the consecrated Wine His Blood ; that He Himself would be our Priest for ever ; that our action should be His action. In the sacred mysteries of the Christian altar there is a worship vastly higher than anything that we can do for ourselves, even when we do it in Christ's Name. The offering of the Holy Eucharist is Christ's own action. He is personally present as Priest and Victim. It is not that His Sacrifice is repeated ; it is not repeated, but it is renewed and pleaded again and again. In the Eucharist, therefore, God is worshipped perfectly, adequately, as He deserves to be worshipped. The worshipper is Christ Himself, and the congregation are there to say their Amen and make His offering their own. 'By whom, and with whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, all honour and glory be unto Thee, O Father Almighty, world without end. *Amen.*'<sup>1</sup>

But there is another point to remember about the Holy Eucharist and the worship which we offer there. We said just now that Christ is God and Man ; and that as God He receives worship but as Man He offers it. So far we have been thinking of the worship which as our Representative He offers in the Eucharist. But we must

<sup>1</sup> The original Latin form is 'through Him, and with Him, *and in Him,*' which presents the doctrine even more completely.

not forget that in the Eucharist Christ is actually and personally present. He cannot be separated from what He has taught us to think of as His Body and His Blood. When He promised that the consecrated Bread should be His Body and the consecrated Wine His Blood, the Church took Him at His word. Of course there is no material change in the bread and wine; but there is a real spiritual change. Consecration makes a difference. What were before mere material objects, bread and wine, are now by His word and by the action of the Holy Ghost spiritual realities. We are in the presence of the sacrificed humanity of Jesus Christ, who is God and Man. Therefore, besides joining in the worship which Christ as Man offers to God, it is also our duty to worship Christ Himself because He is God. This is expressed by the outward action of the priest who bows the knee ('genuflects') as soon as he has consecrated the Bread and the Wine, and also holds up ('elevates') the Blessed Sacrament so that the people may see it and make their act of adoration to the Real Presence of our Lord. It is expressed also in the words of the actual Liturgy<sup>1</sup> addressed to Him: 'O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world; have mercy upon us: grant us Thy peace.'

In many churches the Blessed Sacrament

<sup>1</sup> These words do not occur in the English rite, but they are often added unofficially. They are to be found in the Scottish and some other Anglican Liturgies.

is 'reserved'; that is to say, a portion of it is always kept in church in case it may be needed. Sometimes there are people who wish to receive Holy Communion, but are for some good reason unable to come to church when the Sacrifice is being offered. Others are ill, and the Sacrament has to be taken to them in their houses. Occasionally there are serious accidents, and it is important to be able to give the Sacrament quickly to those who may not live until the morning. When the Sacrament is reserved it is always available at any hour of the day or night.

It seems clear that if the Blessed Sacrament is what we believe it to be, the true Body of Christ, there must be a special presence of Christ Himself wherever the Sacrament may be; and that we ought to exhibit the utmost reverence to this presence. The place where the Sacrament is reserved is either a 'tabernacle' in the middle of one of the altars, or an 'aumbry,' which is a little cupboard let into the wall of the sanctuary. The presence of the Sacrament is indicated by a light which is kept constantly burning. We ought always to bow the knee when we pass in front of the Reserved Sacrament; and it is a good thing, if possible, to stay and say a prayer.



## CHAPTER XI

*CHURCH SERVICES*

The Jews had two forms of worship : sacrifice in the Temple, prayer and preaching in the synagogue. The Christian Sacrifice is the Eucharist ; four essential Eucharistic acts, corresponding with Christ's action in the Upper Room. But the first part of the Holy Communion Service is modelled on the worship of the synagogue. The second part is sacrificial. This arrangement is continued in the Anglican rite of Holy Communion. The other ordinary services of the Church are of the 'synagogue' type, and are not sacrificial. Gradual development of these. They were never meant to take the principal place in Christian worship, but to be additional services to be added to the Eucharist and not substituted for it.

THE Christian Church sprang out of the Jewish Church, so we cannot trace the development of Christian worship without saying something about Jewish ideas of worship.

Like almost all other peoples, the Jews from their first beginnings thought of their approach to God as consisting in sacrifice and prayer. Public worship consisted of sacrifice, private worship consisted of prayer. At first sacrifice was offered anywhere, but as time went on the offering was restricted to one place only, the Temple at Jerusalem. When Jerusalem was captured and the inhabitants deported to Baby-

lon, sacrificial worship for the time being came to an end. But some form of public worship seemed essential; and the Jewish leaders developed a system of meeting together for prayer, Scripture - reading, and exhortation. These meetings were held on the Sabbath Day, and the places where they were held came to be called 'synagogues,' that is, 'places of assembly.' After the return from captivity the Temple was rebuilt and sacrificial worship was restored, but the synagogues had been found to be useful, and synagogue worship continued.

When our Lord came, He was proclaimed by the Forerunner as 'the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world.' He said of Himself that He came to give His life a ransom for many; that He would give His Flesh for the life of the world; that we were to eat His Flesh and drink His Blood; that His Body was given for us; that His Blood was shed for many for the remission of sins. This means that we are to think of our Lord's death and Resurrection as being a true Sacrifice. The principal writers of the New Testament—S. Paul, S. Peter, S. John, and the unknown writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews—echo this teaching with the utmost confidence. The Christian doctrine is that our Lord by His life and death, by His Resurrection and Ascension into heaven, has fulfilled the ancient types and constituted Himself the true Sacrifice for all mankind. He is Himself both Priest and Vic-

tim ; He represents the whole human race and offers Himself in perfect obedience to do the Father's will at all costs. If we are united to Him by membership in His Church, and if we sincerely take Him as our Representative before God, God will take the will for the deed and accept us for the sake of Jesus Christ.

The old typical sacrifices are now therefore meaningless. The earliest Christians in Jerusalem no doubt continued to attend at the Temple. They were Jews, and so far there had been no final breach between Jews and Christians. Christians were thought of as a particular religious party within the Jewish Church and nation. Moreover, Christians of Jewish blood continued to attend synagogue worship as long as it was possible for them to do so. At first, indeed, they were often asked to speak in the synagogues and explain their beliefs and principles. But side by side with these Jewish observances on the Sabbath (which of course was Saturday) all Christians from the very first, whether Jews or Gentiles, celebrated their distinctive religious observances on Sunday. Only we must remember that, according to Jewish ideas, the new day began at sunset, not at midnight. So that the Christian assembly in apostolic times took place on what we should call Saturday evening. But this was not thought of as the evening of the Sabbath but as the beginning of 'the Lord's Day.'

What sort of worship, then, was offered when

at the very beginning of Christian history men and women met together for worship?

The centre of it was undoubtedly that rite which has in the course of Christian history received so many names: the Breaking of the Bread, the Lord's Supper, the Eucharist, the Offering of the Gifts, the Holy Sacrifice, the Liturgy, the Mass, the Holy Communion Service, the Celebration. In the Upper Room on the last night of His earthly life our Lord had stamped His whole redeeming work with a liturgical and sacrificial character. He performed certain ritual acts which for ever invested His Passion with the character of Sacrifice. He took the bread. He gave thanks. He broke it for distribution. He said it was His Body. He gave it to His disciples. He took the cup. He gave thanks. He said it was His Blood. He gave that also to His disciples and bade them drink. He said that these ritual acts were to be performed again and again, as His memorial.

He took; He blessed; He brake; He gave to them. These are the central and essential acts of Christian worship. As time went on they had names given to them. They are the Offertory; the Consecration; the Fraction; the Communion. These four Eucharistic acts are performed whenever Christians come together for their principal act of worship.

How, then, did the first disciples carry out our Lord's command to do this in remembrance



of Him? The mere performance of these four acts would hardly take five minutes. There must have been something more than this. It would be natural to build up a form of service like that which they had been used to in the synagogues. In any case, as soon as they found themselves shut out from the Jewish synagogues it was necessary for them to provide something to take the place of their accustomed synagogue worship. In the four Eucharistic acts they had what corresponded to the worship of the Temple, the worship of sacrifice. What they now needed was a Christianized form of the worship of the synagogue, the worship, that is, of prayer, instruction, and edification. So we find in the New Testament that Christian worship included reading from Scripture, preaching, the singing of psalms and hymns, intercessory prayer, and a collection of money for the needs of the Church. This was usually combined with the four Eucharistic acts and formed an introduction to them. When the word 'Mass' came in (almost sixteen centuries ago) as the usual name of the central Christian service, this introductory part came to be known as the Mass of the Catechumens, while the original and central sacrificial act was called the Mass of the Faithful. Catechumens were those who were being instructed for Baptism.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Compare our word 'Catechism,' which is the name of the questions and answers which are taught to those who, though baptized, are still being prepared for Confirmation.

These were allowed to attend the preliminary service, but had to leave the church before the main part of the 'Mass' or Eucharist began. The Faithful were the baptized who would attend the whole service every Sunday as a matter of course.

It is not difficult to trace the same arrangement in our own service of Holy Communion. It begins with prayer: first one or two introductory prayers, then 'Lord, have mercy,' and then the 'Collect,' which is the special prayer belonging to the particular Sunday or festival which is being observed. Then we get readings from Scripture, generally something from one of the Epistles (or Letters) of the Apostles, and always a passage from one of the Gospels, which contain the story of our Lord's earthly life. These readings, or 'lessons,' both of which are usually from the New Testament, take the place of the Old Testament lessons which were read in the synagogue.

The Collects, Epistles, and Gospels for the whole year are printed together just *before* the Holy Communion Service in all Anglican Prayer Books, and this is the only point at which it is necessary to turn away from the invariable order of the service in order to find another place. Otherwise (except for a few customary omissions) the service usually goes straight through as it is printed in the book. Immediately after 'Lord, have mercy upon us' (often repeated nine or ten times with or without

the Ten Commandments) we turn *back* to the special prayer and readings appointed for the day. If we are not very familiar with the Prayer Book it is as well to put a marker in the place. But if we cannot find them no harm is done. They are, or should be, read in a voice which can be heard all over the church.<sup>1</sup>

Then comes the Creed, which is the continual touchstone of Christian doctrine, followed immediately by the sermon if there is to be one. That concludes the preliminary part of the service. The only element of the original Jewish service which seems to be lacking is the singing of psalms. In early times psalm-singing was very characteristic of this part of the service. To a large extent it consisted of psalms separated from each other by readings from Scripture. As time went on these psalms were cut down to something like one verse in order to shorten the service; and the reformers of our Prayer Book decided that as there was plenty of psalm-singing in other services they would cut them out of the Mass altogether. It was a pity, but the loss is not of vital importance.<sup>2</sup>

At the end of the preliminary part of the service any who are unbaptized should leave, and so should any who have been excommuni-

<sup>1</sup> Hymns need another book. There is no *official* hymn-book, but most churches provide hymn-books for strangers.

<sup>2</sup> In some churches, as an enrichment to the service, these psalm verses are restored in the form of 'Introits,' 'Graduals,' and the like. These *are* a great improvement to the service; but they are not part of the official English rite.

cated for grave sins ; *but no one else*. It is not till the end of the service that the priest is bidden to let the people depart with a blessing. There is no provision for any one to depart at any other point.

We come, then, to the central act of Christian worship, the actual pleading of the Lord's own Sacrifice according to His command.

First we have the Offertory. That does not mean the collecting of money, though a collection does take place at this point in the service in close connection with the Offertory proper. But that which we offer to God at this point is not so much coins of money (though these do in some sort signify that we wish to devote all we have and are to God) but rather the symbols of our Lord's own appointment, the bread and the wine which are to be consecrated as the Body and Blood of the Lord. Here is the first Eucharistic act. The priest takes bread and wine and solemnly lays them upon the altar, offering them to God.

The second Eucharistic act is the Consecration, that is, the solemn act of praise to God, in the course of which the earthly elements of bread and wine become, according to our Lord's own words, and because of His words, His true Body and Blood. This is not quite clear in the English service, which for reasons connected with the controversies of the sixteenth century has suffered some disarrangement. In this service, immediately after the Offertory the



priest says a long prayer for the Church. Intercession (which means prayer for others) has always been very closely associated with the act of consecration, and forms an excellent prelude to it; but it would be a much better and clearer arrangement if the service went on at once from this to the act of thanksgiving and consecration which forms the central act of the Eucharistic service. According to the English rite, however, there are two acts of preparation for the receiving of Communion which are interpolated into the rite at this point. The first is a confession of sin, with an absolution to follow; the second is the beautiful prayer which begins, 'We do not presume,' commonly known as 'The Prayer of Humble Access.' But these are really out of place. The main course of the service proceeds from the Prayer for the Church to *Sursum corda*, the Preface, and the Consecration. Of these *Sursum corda* (which is Latin for 'Lift up your hearts') are the first words of a very ancient dialogue between priest and people with which any solemn prayer of blessing is introduced. This is followed by the Preface, beginning 'It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty,' which is the great act of praise and thanksgiving which introduces the Consecration. It occurs in every known Liturgy, and is meant to lead directly to the recitation of those words of Christ Himself by which He defined the meaning of the Eucharistic mystery: 'This

is My Body which is given for you. . . . This is My Blood which is shed for you.'

The third essential Eucharistic act is the Fraction, the solemn and ceremonial breaking of the Bread which gave its earliest name to the whole service. This is obscured in the English rite by the fact that it is performed at the moment of Consecration instead of as a separate action.

The final Eucharistic act is the Communion or actual receiving of the Sacrament. This is an essential part of the service, because in it the members of the Church on earth give themselves to Christ to be transformed into His likeness. It is thus not merely Christ's supreme gift of Himself to us, but also our surrender of ourselves to Him. The priest, therefore, as representing the people, must always communicate to complete the sacrificial act of the Church. After he has done so, the people, or as many of them as are prepared to do so, proceed to the reception of the Blessed Sacrament. In most Liturgies the Lord's Prayer is said in preparation for this reception, but in the English rite, very strangely, it is said afterwards.

All that remains is to thank God for the Gifts received and to depart with the Church's blessing. In the English rite, between the Thanksgiving and the Blessing is inserted the magnificent hymn which begins, 'Glory be to God on high.' This originally belonged to the earlier part of the service, that alternation of psalmody

Scripture which we saw to have been modelled on the service of the synagogue.

It will have been seen that the order in which the prayers occur in the English rite is somewhat confusing; and indeed the natural and traditional order has been restored in the national rites of other Anglican Churches, as in those of Scotland, the United States, South Africa, and others. English Churchmen in these countries are often puzzled by the difference in the order of the prayers; but in fact it is the English order which is abnormal. There is certainly no need for the ordinary worshipper to trouble about these matters, which indeed he only notices when for any reason he happens to leave one country for another. The English rite is a composition of great dignity and great simplicity, couched in some of the most perfect English which has ever been written, and preserves (despite occasional dislocations which fret the liturgical expert) the massive outlines of the universal liturgy of Christendom.

The other ordinary Sunday services of the Anglican Churches are known either as Mattins and Evensong, or alternatively as Morning and Evening Prayer. In structure they are similar to the original form of the 'Mass of the Catechumens' or 'Ante-Communion Service.' That is to say, they consist for the most part of alternate reading of Scripture and recitation of psalms and canticles. They are, however, much later in origin and in the course of their history

have been considerably affected by monastic custom.

Originally they seem to have arisen from the desire of devout persons to assemble informally for the purpose of saying psalms and prayers together. As time went on the monastic system arose, and communities of men and women lived together under a more or less strict rule, which included the recitation of the whole Psalter every week together with appropriate readings and prayers. The next stage was that an obligation was laid upon all bishops, priests, and deacons to say what had now come to be called the Divine Office, either publicly or privately, every day. When it was said publicly it was natural that lay people should come voluntarily to join in it. There are eight such 'offices' in all: one for the night and seven for the day. At first, in the monasteries, these were said separately; but it is obvious that no one living an ordinary life in the world, whether priest or layman, could pledge himself to do this, without upsetting the whole normal routine of life. The custom therefore arose of combining the offices, and saying them in two or three groups.

At the time of the English Reformation Cranmer, or his advisers, had the happy idea of adapting these services to general use by reducing them to two in number, putting them into English, and simplifying their arrangement. The Psalms were to be recited once a



month instead of once a week ; the readings from Scripture were lengthened and made much more continuous ; and other readings (from the Fathers and the Lives of the Saints) were omitted. It was a brilliant conception, and on the whole most successfully accomplished ; but it had one effect which is disastrous, and was probably unforeseen. In the Middle Ages the bad custom had sprung up of lay people receiving Holy Communion as a rule only at Easter. Cranmer desired to correct this by a drastic regulation that no Celebration should take place at all on Sundays or any other days unless a fairly large proportion of the communicants of the parish was present. The result was not what he had intended. The laity declined to have their immemorial abuses suddenly reformed. The communicants did not present themselves, and in consequence the original service instituted by our Lord became an occasional event, and the Church's latter arrangement of Mattins and Evensong took its place as the ordinary and staple morning and evening service of the Church of England. We are only just beginning to get back to the true idea that the Eucharist is the central Christian service, and that it is the other services which are additional.

Newcomers to the Church may sometimes find these services a little difficult to follow. As compared with the Holy Communion Service the language is far less simple. The ideas expressed, especially in the psalms and some of the lessons

from the Old Testament, do not always fit in with Christian moral sentiment. We have to remind ourselves that they were written before the coming of our Lord. Yet our Lord Himself made constant use of the Old Testament, and it must always be read in the light of the Christian revelation. Condemnation of the sinner has to be purged of the spirit of hatred and revenge. All this calls for some measure of spiritual discernment (see pp. 174-6). There is also a little difficulty in finding the places. It is only possible to follow the service word for word if one is provided with a Bible as well as a Prayer Book. However, it is not necessary to follow the lessons from the Bible; and apart from these there are only two points where the service breaks away from the fixed order for Morning or Evening Prayer. One is at the psalms specially appointed for the day, and the other is at the collect. It is usually quite possible to hear the words of the latter without turning it up in the book, so that if we know where to find the psalms we ought not to be at a loss.

#### NOTE ON THE WORD 'MASS'

From the fifth century to the sixteenth the regular word for the Holy Communion Service throughout Western Christendom was the 'Mass,' just as in the East it was the 'Liturgy.'

The word itself simply means 'dismissal.' As we have seen, there were two dismissals of the worshippers in primitive times: first a dis-

missal of catechumens after the sermon and before the Offertory, and then a dismissal of the faithful at the end of the service. By a slight change of meaning, the first part of the service came to be called the 'Mass of the Catechumens,' and the second the 'Mass of the Faithful,' and the service as a whole was 'the Mass.'

The question is whether the service ceased to be the Mass when it was put into English and the order of some of the parts was changed. The more moderate Reformers certainly did not think so; in fact, they went out of their way to explain that the Mass and the Communion Service were in essence the same thing. In the first Reformed Prayer Book the service is described as 'The Supper of the Lord and the Holy Communion, commonly called the Mass.' It was the extreme Reformers who so much disliked the word, and contrived that it should not appear in the Prayer Book put out by the authority of the State a few years later.

In itself it is clear that the word is perfectly colourless, and merits neither praise nor blame. It means the Communion Service, neither more nor less. In practice, however, the use or disuse of it has some importance. The objection to it is that in many quarters there is a strong prejudice against it on the ground that it is a distinctively Roman word. It would be more accurate to say that it is distinctively *Western*, but has dropped out of use since the Reformation until comparative recent years except in the

Roman and Lutheran service-books. The question is whether it is worth while to bring the term into general use again.

Of course it is not always wise to trample on prejudice unmercifully. Some people are exasperated by the word, and it is necessary to explain very patiently why it is thought desirable to use it. Even when this has been done the use of it may in some places do more harm than good.

What, then, is the motive of those who habitually refer to the Communion Service as 'the Mass'?

1. In view of the mistaken opinion that the Anglican Reformation was the setting up of a new form of religion and the founding of a new Church it seems to many that it is a good thing to emphasize continuity. The Anglican Churches are not new Churches but reformed Churches. The Church of England, which is the mother of most of them, did not come into existence in the sixteenth century, but reformed herself. So neither did her central service come into existence at that period; it is simply a reformed version of the service which had been in existence ever since the Last Supper in the Upper Room. So also it is important to show that Anglicans have not a different service from Roman Catholics, but the same service in a reformed shape.

2. The shortness and simplicity of the word is a great advantage. The Catholic religion is



meant to be the religion of simple people; and if we are to teach simple people to treat the Lord's service as their own service to which they may and ought to come regularly and frequently, it seems that we must find a simple name for it. To 'go to Mass' every Sunday sounds a straightforward way of setting forth a Catholic obligation: the same can hardly be said for 'attending the Communion Service,' or even 'attending the Eucharist.'

3. The other names for the service are not completely satisfactory. 'The Communion' suggests that the service is only an opportunity for receiving the Sacrament, and therefore seems to obscure the Catholic doctrine that it is also a service of the worship of God. 'Have you been to Communion?' means 'Have you received the Blessed Sacrament?' 'Have you been to Mass?' means 'Have you attended the service?' Of course we can make our meaning clear by speaking of 'the Communion *service*,' but that is not only very cumbrous, but also gives a one-sided emphasis to the Communion or manward aspect of the service while omitting the Godward aspect of worship and oblation.

'The Eucharist' is a little difficult for ordinary people. Moreover, if we take the word in its strict and original sense, it is again one-sided, suggesting that the service is only a giving of thanks. On the other hand, for very many centuries the word has come to be a name of the Sacrament itself, that is, of the consecrated

Bread and Wine or the Lord's Body and Blood under the forms of bread and wine. It is perhaps rather confusing to come back to using it as a name of the service.

Similar objections seem to hold against 'The Liturgy.' It is a difficult, unfamiliar, unhomely word; moreover in modern Western usage it means *any* set and formal service. It is, speaking generally, only in the East that it has the same meaning as in the West attaches to 'the Mass.'<sup>1</sup>

'The Lord's Supper' is the word used in the English Catechism, but it is not satisfactory. For one thing it has so sacred a sound that it has never come into general use, for which indeed it is hardly suitable. Moreover, in spite of its use by some early writers to mean what was afterwards called 'the Mass,' it is very doubtful if this is its true meaning. It seems more probable that when S. Paul uses it he was referring to that curious and dangerous custom of apostolic days by which the offering of the Eucharistic Sacrifice was combined with a social meal in conscious imitation of the Lord's Supper in the Upper Room.

On the whole, therefore, it seems that it is a good thing to press, though with all possible tact and gentleness, for the restoration of this ancient and simple name for the celebration of the sacred mysteries of the Body and Blood of Christ.

<sup>1</sup> It is the official short title of the Scottish rite, which has an 'Eastern' tendency.

## CHAPTER XII

*THE SACRAMENTS**(A) GENERAL**(B) SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION*

(a) In early times the word 'sacrament' had quite a general meaning. In the Middle Ages the meaning was narrowed, and the number specified as seven. The more extreme Reformers would not acknowledge more than two: Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The English Church laid great stress on the fact that two were ordained by Christ and were generally necessary to salvation, but did not deny the sacramental character of the others.

(b) Baptism is the foundation of the others. It should be administered to infants if there is some guarantee that they will be brought up as Christians. Godparents.

Confirmation. Its relation to Baptism. Its effect, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Its outward sign, laying on of bishop's hand (or hands) or anointing with chrism. Latter omitted in English rite, but should be restored.

Penance. The sacrament of forgiveness and restoration. It is administered by a priest after confession has been made of sins committed.

**L**IFE in the Catholic Church centres to a large extent on the Sacraments, and it may be useful to give a short account of what is

meant by this word. It has been used in different senses at different periods of history. In early times it was quite a vague word used of any solemn Christian action. We read, for instance, of the seven sacraments of the Lord's Prayer, meaning what we should call the seven petitions contained in that prayer. About the thirteenth century the meaning became more definite. Henceforward it came to mean some outward substance or action by means of which a person might be united, or more closely united, to Christ. It is, of course, pre-supposed that the recipient of a sacrament, if not an infant, must be in a right frame of mind. Thus Baptism is a sacrament, because it first unites the soul to Christ. Penance (or Absolution) is a sacrament because by means of it a soul which has slipped away from Christ may be brought back to union with Him. The Eucharist is a sacrament because it brings to us the very substance of the Flesh and Blood of Christ to be our food. So also there are four other such acts which in one way or another depend for their effect on union with our Lord : Confirmation, Marriage, Holy Orders, and the Anointing or 'Unction' of the Sick.

In the later Middle Ages the numbering of seven sacraments was common to the whole Church, East and West ; but the Reformation produced a different teaching. The extreme Reformers turned to Scripture, and while they found clear commands of Christ on the subjects



of Baptism and the Eucharist, the other sacraments were certainly less clearly indicated. Marriage was a divine institution which existed long before Christ came, the other four seemed to them to be of purely human origin. They therefore reduced the number of the sacraments to two, resolved marriage into a mere contract between a man and a woman, and penance into ecclesiastical discipline, drastically altered the character of 'orders,' and abolished the other two altogether.

The English Church, aiming as it did at a reformed Catholicism, took a different line. It recognized that the two sacraments of Baptism and the 'Lord's Supper' stood on a different level from the others; they were ordained directly by Christ and 'generally necessary to salvation'; the others, though 'commonly called sacraments,' had not the same nature as the two 'sacraments of the Gospel.' The Article which deals with the subject is indeed ambiguous, and perhaps intentionally so, but it seems as though its authors hesitated to deny the sacramental character of what were still 'commonly called sacraments.' The matter is indeed to a large extent a question of words, for of the five lesser sacraments four have a service provided which in spirit is the same as that in use before the Reformation; and though the provision for Unction in the first Reformed Prayer Book does differ very considerably from the form in use before, that is perhaps due to the fact that the

administration of Unction in the Middle Ages had in fact been a good deal corrupted. Far too much emphasis was laid on the forgiveness of sins committed through the five senses, and the whole character of the ordinance had been altered by always deferring it until the soul was on the point of passing away. The rite was omitted altogether in the more Protestant Prayer Book which came out (without any Church authority) at the end of Edward VI's reign, and it has never yet been restored into the Book of Common Prayer. This, however, is hardly equivalent to the *abolition* of Unction; for it is not essential that a book of common (that is, *public*) prayer should contain every rite of the Church. Omission is not necessarily the same as prohibition. In any case the Anointing of the Sick is now recognized, so far as the Church of England is concerned, by the deliberate action of Convocation; and there is likewise a provision for Unction in the Scottish Book of Common Prayer and in the official Prayer Books of other Anglican Churches.

It remains to say something about each of the sacraments in turn; but less will be said about the greater sacraments than about the lesser ones, since to a large extent we have dealt with these already.

*Baptism.* This is the foundation of all. It gives membership in the Church, and so, because the Church is God's family, the baptized person is God's own child. Because the Church is

Christ's Body, the baptized is a member (a living part) of Christ; because the Church is the beginning of the kingdom of heaven, the baptized has already begun to inherit that kingdom.

The children of Christian parents should be baptized in infancy. The same is true of any children about whom there is some security that they will be brought up in the knowledge and fear of God. They are given these great privileges on the understanding that they will be informed later on of the blessings they have received and the use that they must make of them. If it seems that children are going to be brought up as heathen they should not be baptized until they are old enough to be converted to Christianity. Godparents should themselves be faithful members of the Church, and it is their duty to see that their godchildren are taught the faith and practice of the Church. But it is not true to say they are responsible for the sins of their godchildren. Their responsibility is confined to seeing that the children are taught the faith and, in due course, confirmed by the bishop.

*Confirmation.* Confirmation is the completion of Baptism. It is normally administered by a bishop,<sup>1</sup> and in modern times it is not conferred

<sup>1</sup> In the Western Church. In the East the priest confirms the newly-baptized person (usually of course a baby) immediately after Baptism with chrism which has been consecrated by a bishop.

until the candidate has arrived at the age of reason. This does *not* mean that the candidates must understand all about Confirmation; if that were so, nobody would ever be confirmed, for no one can fully understand the action of the Holy Spirit. It means that they must know the difference between right and wrong and be capable of prayer and of understanding that God is conferring a great blessing upon them.

What exactly is this blessing? It seems strange that there should be any difficulty about answering this question; but it must be remembered that in early days Baptism and Confirmation, though sometimes administered to adults and sometimes to infants, were always administered as nearly as possible *together*; normally at the same service. The candidates were first baptized, then confirmed, and then at once received the Holy Communion. Their initiation into the Church had two parts, Baptism and Confirmation; the first was performed by a priest, the second by a bishop. There was no doubt about the final result: the person was cleansed from sin and united to the Church, that was the result of Baptism. But he or she likewise received the Holy Ghost, and that was thought of principally as the result of Confirmation. But the fact that the two sacraments were so closely connected made it unnecessary to say what exactly was the effect of Baptism by itself. It would be very rash to say



that there is no gift of the Holy Ghost in Baptism; but we can say truly that Baptism has always been completed by Confirmation, and that the outpouring of the full gift of the Holy Ghost is the characteristic effect of Confirmation.

Confirmation consists outwardly of the prayer of the bishop for the sevenfold gifts of the Holy Ghost, together with one or both of two actions, the laying on of hands and anointing with the holy chrism (oil mixed with sweet-scented balsam, specially consecrated for this purpose). In the New Testament it appears at first sight that the outward sign is the laying on of hands alone; but it is sometimes held that this does not refer to Confirmation, and that even at that date the recognized ritual act was anointing. However that may be, the laying on of hands fell into abeyance and very soon the principal emphasis was laid upon anointing. In the Middle Ages the only relics left of the laying on of hands were (1) the stretching out of the bishop's hands over the candidates during the sacramental prayer, and (2) the contact of his hand with the forehead of each candidate at the moment of anointing. Theologians, however, had always maintained<sup>1</sup> that the laying on of hands was part of the 'matter' of Confirmation, and this fact, together with the absence of any clear reference to anointing in the New Testament, led the English Reformers to omit anointing altogether

<sup>1</sup> At all events since the third century.

and substitute the laying on of hands. The practice of anointing the forehead immediately before the bishop lays his hand on the head has been adopted in some places, and it seems very desirable that both these ancient and significant acts should be employed.

In the Scottish rite of Confirmation the bishop addresses the candidate by name, saying, 'N., I sign thee with the sign of the Cross and I lay my hand upon thee, in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.' Then follows the well-known prayer from the English rite beginning 'Defend, O Lord.' The Scottish bishops have recently given official, though not synodical, recognition to the practice of anointing the forehead at the same moment as the cross is signed upon it.

It is important to notice that Confirmation does not mean that the candidate confirms the vows made on his behalf at his Baptism. He does not confirm anything; he *is confirmed*. The Anglican practice of renewing the baptismal vows immediately before Confirmation is a very good one; but it is no more the essence of Confirmation than the making of the baptismal vows is the essence of Baptism. It is in fact a quite modern custom, and to confuse it with the august mystery of Confirmation is merely a mark of ignorance.

It is probable that this idea that Confirmation is something that one does for oneself and not (as the truth is) something that is done to one,

is responsible for the idea that no one should be confirmed until he or she has reached the age of fifteen or sixteen. It is far better to let children be confirmed much younger than this, in order that they may have the fullest measure of sacramental grace to strengthen them against the many severe temptations of adolescence. It is impossible to lay down any rule, but somewhere between seven and eleven is probably best in most cases. But in cases where children show no sign of responding to religious teaching, especially if they come from irreligious homes, it may be better to put off Confirmation until they are grown-up. It would be better not to receive Confirmation at all than to receive it without repentance and faith and some desire and intention to serve God.

The English Prayer Book says that 'every one' of the children brought to the bishop for Confirmation 'shall have a godfather, or a godmother, as a witness of their Confirmation.' This does not mean, as is often supposed, that one of the original baptismal godparents is to be present; but that some one shall act as godparent at Confirmation. The candidates are, normally, *children* and still need some one older than themselves to keep an eye on them. This is made clear in the Scottish Canon on the subject, which says, 'Each candidate for Confirmation shall, whenever possible, have a witness present as his godparent at Confirmation.'

*Penance.* Penance is the sacrament of

restoration. When we were baptized, our souls were cleansed from all the inherited taint of sinfulness. (That is the meaning of the curious phrase, 'original sin,' which is often misunderstood.) Also, if we were old enough to have actually committed sins, they also were forgiven through Baptism, assuming, of course, that we were sorry for them and intended to do better. But, unfortunately, Baptism does not give us immunity from temptation. We are sure to be tempted, and we are sure to fall into sin sometimes. We may even fall into serious, deliberate sin which is a load on our conscience and comes between us and God. We may lose that grace which was given to us so freely and lovingly in our Baptism. That is why there is another sacrament through which we may make sure of forgiveness. Our Lord gave His Apostles authority to remit sins in His Name. This they did whenever they admitted people to Baptism. But this authority did not come to an end when people had been baptized. They might fall into sin again and need to be forgiven again. Nor did this authority come to an end when the Apostles died ; it was not a personal endowment of the Twelve and no one else. Forgiveness will always be needed as long as men and women go on committing sins ; and God would not take away from the Church the gift which He had once bestowed. Authority to declare sins forgiven is a power which has always been exercised by the ministers of the



Church ; at first by the bishops, but afterwards by priests also. But whereas in the earliest times it was only very grave and notorious sins which were dealt with by the ministers of the Church, it was found, as time went on, that the best way to deal with sin and get the guilt and power of it done away was to go to a priest and tell him all about it, and get him to exercise his ministry of pardon.

Penance is the sacrament of forgiveness. No doubt, if we are really heart-broken about our sins, if we hate them for the love of God, and rely upon His mercy, and intend to have no more to do with them, we are forgiven then and there. But all the same we should be very unwise to neglect the sacrament by which forgiveness is pledged to us by the word of Christ Himself. Our penitence is for the most part very imperfect, and there is nothing which helps so much towards the improvement of penitence as the frank confession of our sins. When we have done that, we have done what it is in our power to do by way of showing sorrow for our sins ; and unless our penitence has been altogether insincere we may be quite certain that we are right with God.

If our conscience is uneasy, then, the right thing to do is to go to Confession. But it is also wise to make a regular practice of sacramental Confession. Not only does this deepen our penitence, but it is also a great security that if at any time we do commit a really serious sin we

shall confess it and get it put right when we next make our Confession.

Penance consists (1) in going to a priest and confessing in his hearing all the sins (or at all events all the serious sins) which we can remember having committed since our Baptism, or since our last Confession ; (2) in accepting the penance he imposes (usually a psalm or some short prayers to be said), and in promising, if necessary and if possible, to put right any wrong we may have done ; (3) in humbly receiving absolution from the priest as God's minister.

The priest is absolutely forbidden to mention to any one the fact that a penitent has committed a sin. He may not even speak of it afterwards to the penitent without his or her permission. This is called the 'seal' of Confession, and it is never broken.

It should be remembered that this power to grant absolution was solemnly committed to the priest at his ordination when the bishop said to him, 'Whosoever sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven.' But it is not the priest's forgiveness, but God's. The priest is God's minister or servant, and speaks in His Name.

All candidates for Confirmation should make their Confession before being confirmed, and at regular intervals all their life afterwards. But even more important than these regular intervals is the need to go to Confession as soon as possible if we have fallen into serious sin. This is what the Litany calls 'deadly sin.' It is sin

which is deliberately committed when we know that in committing it we are turning away from God. The sooner this corrupting influence can be removed from our minds and consciences the better, and there is no such thorough way of doing this as going to Confession.

## CHAPTER XIII

*THE SACRAMENTS (continued)*  
*(C) THE REMAINING FOUR*  
*SACRAMENTS*

The Eucharist is a Sacrifice, but also a sacrament. As a sacrament its object is to strengthen and refresh our souls and enable them to grow.

Marriage is the permanent and exclusive union of one man and one woman. Marriage between two baptized persons has a specially sacred character. Dissolution of marriage cannot be recognized, inasmuch as the permanence of marriage belongs to the divine law.

Holy Orders. This sacrament rests upon Christ's appointment of the Twelve. The distinction between bishops, priests, and deacons goes back in principle to Apostolic times. A layman is a *churchman* who is not a clergyman.

Unction of the Sick has unfortunately been little used among Anglicans since the Reformation; but it goes back to the time of the Apostles and ought to be brought back into regular use.

*THE Eucharist.* There are many ways of looking at the Eucharist. We have thought of it already as an act of worship, as a sacrifice, and as bringing into our midst the Real Presence of our Lord. In these respects it differs from the other sacraments; but as a *Gift* to be administered and received it falls into place with the rest. The object of the re-



ception of Holy Communion is the feeding, strengthening, and refreshing of the soul by partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ. It is tempting to compare it to ordinary food, and say that as our bodies waste away without material food, so our souls waste away without heavenly Food. But this comparison must be used with caution. Material food is essentially perishable, but the heavenly Food of the Eucharist is eternal. The object of feeding upon the Body and Blood of Christ is not so much to repair loss as to *grow*. Each Communion is meant to have its permanent effect on the soul, an effect which can only be lost by deliberate indulgence in sin.

To receive Holy Communion is to feed upon Christ. If that seems too startling a phrase we may remember the very words assigned to Him by S. John: 'He that eateth Me, he also shall live because of Me.'<sup>1</sup> In Holy Communion Christ comes to us from without and enters into us in all the power of His sacrificed humanity. It is the whole Christ who feeds us, Christ divine and human, and the cleansing and strength that comes from Him is meant to flow into our whole nature both to purge and to sanctify.

*Marriage.* The sacramental character of marriage is not very obvious at first sight, inasmuch as the institution of marriage is far older than Christianity, and in most respects

<sup>1</sup> S. John vi. 57 (R.V.).

there does not seem to be any very clear difference of character between Christian and non-Christian marriage. Marriage in the sense in which the Church uses the word is the act whereby a man and a woman enter into contract to live together and have intercourse with each other. It is of the essence of marriage that the union is intended to be permanent and exclusive. A formal and explicit agreement that it should be of a merely temporary character would invalidate the marriage from the Christian point of view ; and polygamy is not recognized as being marriage at all. All this applies equally, in the eyes of the Church, whether the parties are Christian or not. Our Lord in expounding the true character of marriage does not seem to be dealing only with marriage as it was to be in the future life of His Church. It is marriage as such that is permanent and exclusive.

What, then, is the difference between heathen and Christian marriage? It seems to consist in the essential difference between the baptized and the unbaptized. Marriage within the Body of the Church has a sacred character which is lacking when the parties to marriage have not been regenerated in Baptism. There is a Third Party to their contract—God. It is a special vocation, intended for the increase of Christian holiness, and we rely on God to bless and sanctify the new relationship. That is why there is a special service for the sanctifying of marriage ; but it is important to observe that the validity

and the sacramental character of marriage do not depend on the service. The Church expects her children to come to church to have their marriage blessed by the priest, and it would be very wrong for members of the Church to neglect to do this ; but such neglect would have no effect whatever on the character of the marriage itself.<sup>1</sup> It would still be Holy Matrimony, though indeed the neglect of the Church's precept, if deliberate, might well form a barrier to the reception of the grace which God desires to give to those who enter on this state of life.

Marriage vows are lifelong, and it is expected that those who contract matrimony will live together 'till death them do part.' Circumstances may arise in which divorce, in the sense of separation, may be inevitable ; but re-marriage after divorce should not be tolerated. Such 'marriages' are held to be invalid by the traditional theology of the Western Church, and the English Canon Law only contemplates the possibility of divorce if the person to whom the divorce is granted undertakes to remain in virtual celibacy.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Under the present discipline of the Roman Church the marriage of a (Roman) Catholic conducted otherwise than by a priest is invalid. This, however, is confessedly a domestic rule of the Roman Church and does not affect Anglicans.

<sup>2</sup> It should be mentioned that the Orthodox Church of the East is much less strict about divorce. But (apart from a curious passage in S. Matthew, which is of doubtful interpre-

Remarriage during the lifetime of the lawful spouse renders a person liable to excommunication. This is a point which is often fastened on for bitter attack. Why, it is said, should this one offence be singled out for exceptional treatment? Is breaking the marriage vow the one unforgivable sin? But this question completely misses the point. Forgiveness is freely given for any sin, if only it can be hoped that the sinner is penitent. But when a person who has been a party to a divorce suit has contracted matrimony a second time during the lifetime of the original spouse, and is still living in matrimonial relations with the second partner, it is quite evident that there is no repentance. It may well be true that there are other sins far more serious than adultery, and especially than a state of life which those who are living in it do not believe to be adultery at all. Very likely habitual slanderers and perpetrators of cruelty and oppression ought to be kept back from the Lord's Table more often than they are. But the point to be clear about is that excommunication, if it is inflicted in cases of remarriage after divorce, is *not* to be thought of as tation) the whole tenor of the New Testament is to insist that it is a law of God that marriage cannot be dissolved. That being so, it is clear that the Church cannot permit it. Divine law must always override any mere ecclesiastical law. It is maintained, however, by some good authorities that the law that marriage can never be dissolved is only absolute in the case of Christians; so that if the parties are unbaptized it may be possible to recognize marriage after divorce.



punishment for a sin committed in the past, but as a declaration that the present state of life is adulterous and sinful. Our Lord's own words should be remembered. He said to the Samaritan woman who had had five husbands, 'He whom thou now hast is not thy husband';<sup>1</sup> and although He forgave the sin of the woman taken in adultery, His final sentence was, 'Go, *and sin no more*.'<sup>2</sup>

Marriage should be prepared for and entered upon religiously, and the marriage service should not be treated as a mere ceremony, still less as a purely social function or occasion for display. Those who wish to behave according to Catholic tradition should endeavour to arrange for a celebration of Holy Communion (a 'Nuptial Mass') at the time of their marriage, an observance which will effectually preserve the sacred character of the wedding ceremony.

*Holy Orders.* Some indication has already been given as to the nature of the sacrament of Holy Orders. We have seen that in the first days of the Church's life there was already a sharp distinction between the Apostles and the rest of the Church.<sup>3</sup> The Apostles were the leaders, the teachers, the rulers of the Church. The other members shared to the full in the great fact of churchmanship. Like the Apostles they were members (which means limbs, or living parts) of the Body of Christ; their sins

<sup>1</sup> S. John iv. 18. <sup>2</sup> *ibid.*, viii. 11. <sup>3</sup> Acts v. 13.

had been forgiven ; they had received the sanctifying gift of the Holy Spirit ; they joined in offering the Eucharist and received the Holy Communion every Sunday. But the Apostles had received their commission direct from Christ Himself, and it was their part to represent within the Church the pastoral and authoritative functions of the Head of the Body. Thus it was S. Peter, as leader of the Twelve, who invited the Jews on the Day of Pentecost to turn to Christ in penitence and by Baptism to become members of the Church.<sup>1</sup> So it was the same S. Peter who by direct divine guidance admitted the first Gentiles to the Christian body.<sup>2</sup> It was S. Paul who, raised to the apostolate by the risen and glorified Christ, went all over the known world founding Churches and appointing their elders, ministers, or priests. So it was the Apostles who laid their hands on those who had been baptized by inferior ministers and so conferred on them the fullness of the Holy Spirit's gifts.<sup>3</sup>

We have spoken of 'elders, ministers, or priests,' and in the last sentence of 'inferior ministers.' It is of course clear that as the Church expanded it would need some other rulers and pastors besides the original twelve Apostles. In any case the Apostles would not live for ever and they had to have successors. It is important, therefore, to see what steps were

<sup>1</sup> Acts ii. 38.    <sup>2</sup> *ibid.*, x. 48.    <sup>3</sup> *ibid.*, viii. 17.

taken in the first days of the Church to supply these needs.

In every case, the ministers are commissioned and ordained either by an Apostle or by one who has received authority from an Apostle to give Ordination. They do not derive their position from the fact of being chosen by the Church, but from the fact that the Apostles or their deputies laid hands on them to assign them their due status in the Church. This status varied. In one case, they seem to be appointed very largely to look after the secular business of the Church. In another, they are left behind by S. Paul to take the pastoral charge of the newly-founded Churches of Asia Minor. In other cases, again, S. Paul not only ordained men to the ministerial order but assigned to them the power and duty of ordaining others to the ministry. Always it is clear that what is being bestowed is not an authority derived from the general consent of the members of the Church, but an extension of the authority originally given to the Apostles by our Lord. It seems clear also that there were different degrees in the authority thus delegated: some were appointed to a completely subordinate position, others to a real pastoral responsibility, others again to a position not unlike that of the Apostles themselves. It will easily be seen that this arrangement corresponds with the present system of three sacred Orders of the ministry, deacons, priests, and bishops, and rests

on the same principle. The bishop corresponds with the position of the Apostle, the priest with that of the elder (who in apostolic times was also known as the bishop), while the deacon still retains the same name as he has always borne. The bishop, like the Apostle, is the only person who ordains other ministers, and in the Western Church he is the normal and ordinary minister of Confirmation. His general position is also similar to that of the Apostles, except, that while the Apostles for the most part seem to have acted either corporately or else as missionaries who moved from place to place, the bishop has a definite sphere of jurisdiction assigned to him.<sup>1</sup>

The distinctive function of the presbyter, or priest, is pastoral. He is, normally, chosen to lead the worship of the Church and act as a teacher in some sphere assigned to him by Church order and approved by the bishop as pastor-in-chief. In earlier days these functions were carried out principally by the bishops themselves, and the presbyters formed their administrative council. But with the growth of the Church it became impossible to lay the whole burden of pastoral care and leadership

<sup>1</sup> Even so it is a mistake to over-emphasize the purely diocesan character of episcopal jurisdiction. The distinctive authority of the bishop arises from the fact that he is supposed, by acting in union with his fellow-bishops, to represent the mind of the Church as a whole. He is a member of the Episcopal Order, chosen to represent the mind of the Church as a whole in some particular region.



on the shoulders of the bishop, and the presbyter naturally began to act as his representative in the care of particular congregations. Thus the title of 'priest,' which was at first reserved for bishops, became the ordinary designation of the members of the second order of the ministry. They began to carry out the distinctively priestly functions which in earlier times had belonged almost entirely to the bishop; they celebrated the Eucharist, heard confessions, gave absolution, preached sermons; it was therefore only natural that the priestly title should have passed to them along with the priestly office.<sup>1</sup> But the essential fact has remained that the bishop is the possessor of the

<sup>1</sup> It will be seen that there is some confusion in the meaning of the word 'priest.' Originally used as the equivalent of the person whom we now call a bishop, it came to be used indiscriminately both for bishops (in the modern sense) and for those who had hitherto been called presbyters, that is, elders. Later still the word 'presbyter' fell out of use, and the three sacred Orders came to be known as bishops, priests, and deacons. This has happened particularly in English-speaking countries, owing perhaps to the fact that the English word 'priest' is an abbreviation of 'presbyter.' So it comes about that while the English Ordinal speaks of ordaining a priest the Latin Pontifical says, 'The Ordination of a Presbyter.' The Scottish Liturgy employs the word 'presbyter,' but in rather a misleading way. It is not used in its proper sense as denoting a member of the second order as distinguished from the first, but simply as the equivalent of 'celebrant.' It would have been better to keep 'priest' in the Liturgy and speak of 'bishops, presbyters, and deacons' in the Prayer for the Clergy.

full apostolic authority. It is his function to ordain others to the ministry and to preside over his diocese in all spiritual matters.

The functions of the deacon have varied considerably in the course of time. At first he seems to have been concerned chiefly with the temporal affairs of the Church. Later he became the bishop's assistant and took a conspicuous part in Church services. Later again (so far as the Western part of the Church is concerned) he slipped almost into insignificance. The diaconate in fact became merely a kind of preparation for the priesthood. But the deacon retains certain liturgical privileges, the reading of the Gospel and the administration of the chalice. No doubt these are usually performed by priests, but it must be remembered that every priest is also a deacon, just as every bishop is also a priest.

The sacrament of Holy Orders, then, is the means whereby men are made deacons, priests, or bishops. Normally each Order must be received successively; but there have been cases where laymen have been made bishops without previous ordination to the lower Orders. This is called consecration *per saltum*, which means 'at one bound.' It is said that the great S. Ambrose was consecrated in this way, and a more modern instance is to be found in the consecration of three Scottish bishops in 1610.

The making of a bishop is called 'consecration,' that of a priest or deacon, 'ordination.'

Normally at least three bishops must take part in the consecration of a bishop. At the ordination of a priest all the priests present, if possible, join in laying hands on their new brother; but only the bishop lays hands upon one who is being ordained as a deacon. The essential point in ordination and in consecration is the laying on of the bishop's hands in such a way as to make clear the intention of the Church to ordain the candidate to some particular and specified order.

The Church on earth is made up of 'clergymen' and 'laymen.' A 'layman' is a member of the Church who has not been ordained to the sacred ministry. The name is derived from a Greek word which means 'people.' As we have seen, the Catholic Church is now (as the Jewish Church was in former times) distinctively 'the people of God.' A 'layman' is a member of this people, in other words a churchman. It is therefore a complete misuse of language to use it in a purely negative sense, as though it meant simply 'any one who is not a clergyman.'

*Unction.* The seventh sacrament is Unction, or the Anointing of the Sick. This is a rite which goes back to the practice of the Apostolic Church, and its almost complete disuse in the Anglican Churches is a grievous and distressing anomaly. The use of anointing in connection with ministration to the sick seems to be coeval with Christianity. The Apostles used it;<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> S. Mark vi. 13.

S. James commanded it,<sup>1</sup> and with no suggestion that he was recommending a hitherto unknown practice.

All through Church history the blessing of oil for a religious rite of anointing is continuous. The anointing of the sick was only one of many anointings which were customary. One of these was the anointing at Confirmation which we have already mentioned; but from a very early date it has been customary for bishops to bless three different oils on Maundy Thursday for sacramental purposes: the oil of the sick, the chrism (a mixture of oil and balsam) for use at Confirmation, and the oil of catechumens for the anointing of those about to be baptized.

The question then arises, What is the object of the anointing of the sick? Various views have been propounded. The Roman Church has gone very far in the direction of making it a sacrament of the dying, and confining its effects to the remission of sin (either the sin itself or else the penalty), and also in connecting it specifically with sins committed by means of the bodily senses. On the other hand, it has been held that it is a kind of miraculous medicine, the effect of which is intended to be the healing of the body and nothing else.

Both these views seem to limit the scope of the sacrament unduly. The idea that it should be restricted to the needs of those who are actually dying is simply a mediaeval abuse, and

<sup>1</sup> S. Jas. v. 14.



the excessive preoccupation with sins of the bodily senses does not do justice to the wide sweep of benefits contemplated by the language of the early Church. On the other hand, this same language goes far beyond the merely medical needs of the body. The idea of remission of sin has been connected with Unction from the very beginning. 'If he have committed sins, it shall be forgiven him.'<sup>1</sup> According to the ancient fifth-century prayer at the blessing of the oil of the sick, which is still in regular use, the object of the anointing is 'to restore the indwelling of the Holy Spirit for the strengthening, healing, and consecrating of the whole personality, and it is effectual for the healing of all disease, bodily and spiritual, whether involving danger to life or not.'<sup>2</sup> It is specifically 'the oil of the sick,' but the use that is to be made of it is directed at least as much to the sick man's soul as to his body. It is of a sacramental character, and by no means to be confused with mere faith-healing. At the same time, although the danger of death has been over-emphasized, it would hardly be suitable to use it for trifling disabilities; and it may be that the strict confining of its use to once in the same illness

<sup>1</sup> S. Jas. v. 15 (R.V.). It is tempting to suppose that what S. James meant was that if the man's sickness was the result of sin, the forgiveness of the sin (conditioned by confession) might, with the help of the anointing, bring about a healing of the body.

<sup>2</sup> This is a paraphrase of the ancient Latin into modern English by the late Dr. Charles Harris.

(though a late innovation) may be a wise provision to guard against the light-hearted and frivolous use of a holy ordinance.

The prevalent disuse of the Anointing of the Sick in the Anglican Churches proceeds from various causes. The fact that it was struck out of the English Prayer Book in the ultra-Protestant revision of 1552 (which had no ecclesiastical authority at all) and has never been replaced has naturally tended to relegate it to obscurity. The general impression, derived from what is really a Roman abuse, that it is a sacrament for the dying only, produces a natural shrinking on the part of those who still hope that they are going to get well. On the other hand, the idea that it is the special sacrament of the dying has not taken sufficient root in Anglican circles to make it natural for a dying person to demand it. Their relations usually desire them to be disturbed as little as possible, and the priest who is attending them very often feels, quite naturally, that Confession and Holy Communion are the really essential things, and that in the absence of any expressed desire for anointing the dying person had better not be troubled.

This is very unsatisfactory. In spite of differences of opinion as to the exact benefits of this sacrament, its complete elimination is a disaster. It can no longer be urged that the Anglican Churches do not recognize it. A form for its administration was recently accepted by

the English Convocations, and the Scottish Church contains such a form within the official Order for the Visitation of the Sick.

The remedy seems to be twofold. (1) The clergy must be induced to take the matter more seriously than they have hitherto done. The bishop should consecrate the oil for the sick regularly every year, and the priests should ask for a supply. (2) The lay people must be taught to think of anointing as the typical ministration of the Church in times of sickness. They should expect as a result the restoration of mental and spiritual balance and poise, with the natural result of favourable results to the actual health of the body. The issues of life and death are in God's hands, and we cannot have an infallible expectation that physical healing will be the result of anointing. But we can be sure that the reception of it as a sacrament is bound to do us good, and the fact that this anointing is specifically for the sick makes it likely that some measure of bodily relief will be obtained.

In all cases of serious sickness a priest should be sent for. He will no doubt be able to help the sick person in ways that are not sacramental; but in the mind of Catholic Christians the paramount duty of the priest is to administer the sacraments. He must be prepared to hear the patient's confession, and to administer Holy Communion; but there is also a special sacrament for the sick. It ought not to be necessary to argue or dispute about so great and merciful a

provision of God. It should be taken for granted that he will offer to administer Unction, and that the sufferer will gratefully accept it. In this way it will fall into place with the other sacraments as God's provision for the state of sickness. Confession should be made first, if possible, in order that the recipient may be in a spiritual condition to reap the full benefits of the anointing; and the hope which should be set before him is that of regaining such wholeness and sanity of soul and mind as may be likely to pass on its due effect even to the body. If the person's time to die has come, we should not wish to hold him back; and in that case Unction will take its place with Confession and Communion as one of the 'Last Sacraments,' but it should no more than either Confession or Communion be restricted to its employment as a preparation for death.



## CHAPTER XIV

*ORDER, OFFICE, AND CHURCH  
GOVERNMENT*

Each of the three Holy Orders confers 'character.' Once a bishop, always a bishop; and so with the other two Orders. But in order to execute his functions, a clergyman must be appointed to some office in the Church. Such offices have definite duties attached to them, and the holders may resign and cease to hold them, or even in some cases be deprived of them.

The proper governing bodies of the Church are called synods. These may be diocesan (consisting of a diocesan bishop and his presbyters) or provincial (consisting of all the diocesan bishops of a certain district with representative presbyters to take a part in their decisions). In the Roman Church this system has collapsed owing to excessive centralization, and in the Church of England owing to establishment and the encroachments of the State.

**I**T is important to notice the difference between 'order' and 'office.' When a man becomes a clergyman he receives an Order; that is to say, a new status which cannot ever be altogether taken away from him. Once a deacon, he remains always a deacon; once a priest, always a priest; once a bishop, always a bishop. (It is true that he can in extreme cases be degraded from Holy Orders, or 'unfrocked'; but the

result of this is usually held to be that in future he is to be treated *as though* he had ceased to be in Orders.) The technical way of expressing this is to say that Holy Orders confer 'character.' It is not of course moral character that is meant, but character in the original sense of something stamped or engraved which cannot be deleted.

But although a man may have been ordained, he cannot act as a minister wherever and however he chooses. He must have a sphere assigned to him. Indeed, as a general rule he cannot be ordained at all until he can show that he has been appointed to some definite work which requires that he should be in one of the sacred Orders. No one can be ordained as deacon or priest unless there is an assistant curacy or chaplaincy or some similar office which he can enter upon immediately he has been ordained. Similarly, no one can be consecrated as a bishop unless he has been already elected or appointed to take charge of a particular diocese, or else to assist some diocesan bishop in his episcopal work.

One cannot receive Order unless there is office in prospect. But such offices are not necessarily permanent. A man may be licensed as an assistant curate in some particular parish. He may then change over to another parish, receiving a new licence from the bishop for this new office. Such licences are given by the bishop on the nomination of the rector or vicar

of the parish in question, and may be revoked. Later on, he may be appointed to be a rector or vicar. The method of appointment varies ; but he can only enter on this new office by the action of the bishop, who assigns to him the 'cure' (that is, the *care*) of souls in a particular parish. This is a position which has more permanence than an assistant curacy, because 'institution to the cure of souls' is an irrevocable act, and he can only be deprived of his office if he commits some grave offence. But it is still office and not Order. He can resign his benefice and cease to be rector of such and such a place. His priesthood remains, but his office comes to an end.

So with a bishopric. A bishop may cease to be 'Bishop of London' ; that is an office, but he can never cease to be a member of the Order of Bishops. An archbishopric is an office, not an Order. A bishop who is elected to be an archbishop is not consecrated afresh ; he merely takes up his new office in the same way that any bishop would do if he were translated from one see to another. By Order he is simply a bishop ; by office he is archbishop of some special province of the Church. If he resigns his see he is generally known as 'Archbishop So-and-so' ; but that is merely a title of courtesy. In actual fact he is *a bishop* and nothing else. It is obvious from what has been said that deaneries and canonries are offices and not Orders. Order, then, depends on the fact of

having been ordained ; office depends on holding a position to which certain duties are attached.

Most offices in the Church which are held by clergymen have some 'jurisdiction' attached to them. That is to say, the bishop of a diocese and the priest of a parish have authority, in virtue of their office (not in virtue of their Order), to take pastoral charge of souls within a certain definite area, a diocese or a parish. Within this area they have a real spiritual authority and no one else can interfere with them. Some such system of jurisdiction is obviously necessary to prevent confusion and maintain discipline. When a bishop has been duly elected (or otherwise canonically appointed to a particular diocese) and his election has been confirmed by the proper authority, and when he has himself been consecrated to the episcopate, he becomes the fountain of jurisdiction for that diocese. All priests and deacons in that diocese receive their authority from him, and he represents to them the general authority of the Church.

It must not, however, be supposed that a bishop can do whatever he likes, or that he can govern arbitrarily. His authority is strictly limited by the canon law of the Church Universal and by that of his own particular part of the Church. It is generally recognized that he may dispense from the observance of some regulations of the Church ; but in general his author-



ity is that which is assigned to him by canon law, and no more.

In primitive times episcopal authority was always exercised *in synod*, that is, it was the joint authority of bishop and presbyters. Later, the executive powers of the Church fell into the bishop's hands more and more, and in the Middle Ages it came to be held that the bishop could make canons (that is, bye-laws) for his own diocese after consulting his synod, even against their will. This seems to have been a mere abuse, and it is certainly very different from the arrangements of the primitive Church.

But the jurisdiction of those who hold office in the Church is not finally limited to their own individual sphere of action. We have seen already that the appointment of a new bishop is not the sole affair of the diocese over which he is to preside. His election must be confirmed either, as in England, by the archbishop, or, as in most other Anglican Churches, by the other bishops of the province. This confirmation implies the willingness of the bishops to welcome a new member to their brotherhood. In the Roman Church, if there has been any election, the confirmation depends on the Pope. Among the Eastern Orthodox customs vary: but the Synod of Bishops always has a decisive voice. Even after a bishop has been consecrated, he and his diocese are not a private concern. Not only are they subject to the law of the universal Church, but also neighbouring dioceses are grouped into

provinces, and each province has its own governing body or 'Provincial Synod.' In England these bodies are known as the 'Convocations,' and consist of all the diocesan bishops and representatives of the Presbyterate or Order of Priesthood.

It will easily be seen that in this way both diocesan bishops and other members of these wider 'Provincial' Synods do exercise an authority which extends beyond the sphere of duty which goes with their office. They are law-makers for the whole province, even though their actual office is confined to a particular diocese or even parish.

It must be pointed out, however, that in many large regions of the Church this synodical system has fallen into almost complete disuse. In the Roman Church, owing to its extreme centralization, all law-making has come to be concentrated in the hands of the Pope and his advisers in Rome. For very different reasons the English Convocations are far from having any unfettered privilege of legislation. At the Reformation indeed the English bishops and presbyters claimed freedom from papal jurisdiction, and the Convocations resumed their legislative powers; but in the circumstances of the time it turned out that they had parted with a distant master to be subjected to one very near at hand, and ever since that time the constraining power of the Crown has lain heavy upon the Established

Church. In Tudor times it was the Sovereign who dominated the councils of the Church ; with the growth of democracy it came to be the Prime Minister. Thus we have in England the extraordinary anomaly that in practice the bishops are appointed by the Prime Minister, and that the Convocations are not allowed to legislate for the Church except by permission of the Crown, and with the assent of the Houses of Parliament.

In the other Anglican Churches, which are not 'established,' there is full freedom of synodical government. In Scotland, for example, the Episcopal Synod and the Diocesan Synods meet every year. The former consists of all the diocesan bishops, the latter of the bishop of each diocese with his presbyters and deacons (newly licensed presbyters and deacons have a right to be summoned, but they cannot vote). Canons can only be passed by the Provincial Synod, consisting of the diocesan bishops and representative presbyters. Laymen are not members of the synods ; but the opinion of the laity on proposed legislation is obtained by means of the Consultative Council on Church Legislation, with a mixed membership of bishops, presbyters, and laymen.

## CHAPTER XV

*RELIGIOUS CEREMONIAL*

There must be *some* ceremonial, though there need not be much. Church ceremonial is based on reverence, good manners, common sense, and tradition. It is good that sometimes and in some places there also be splendour, but this is not necessary.

Object of ceremonial not to impress the congregation but to do honour to God. Very little about liturgical worship in the New Testament, but Revelation v-vii is important.

Ceremonial of the Eucharist and of Morning and Evening Prayer.

**W**HY should Church services be ceremonious? It is rather difficult to answer this question, because the meaning of the word 'ceremonious' is not quite clear. Does the questioner wish to know why Church services are carried through with dignity and beauty? Or is he inquiring about the use of grand and splendid ceremonial, like that of High Mass?

If the former, it is almost enough to answer him by saying that all religious ceremonial is based on the principles of reverence, good manners, and common sense. That was a favourite saying of the great liturgist, the late Dr. F. E. Brightman. You cannot eliminate ceremonial altogether. Any external action must be done



in *some* way, and an official action which a priest carries out *as a priest* had better be done in some specified way. Otherwise individualism will run wild. A prayer must be said standing *or* kneeling; you cannot do both at once. It must be either said *or* sung; and if it is sung it must be sung to some definite tune. The priest must wear *something* in church; if he is there as an official of the Church it is natural for him to wear a uniform. There has therefore been evolved a kind of code of Church customs, quite unimportant in themselves, the general result of which is to give the impression that the priest and his assistants are offering humble worship to God, and are doing it in a natural and orderly way.

But there is one thing to be added to Dr. Brightman's three good qualities, and that is *tradition*. We do not in church try to find out new and striking ways of demeaning ourselves. It seems far better to remember that the Church is a very ancient institution, and that anything that recalls its past is to be reverently used. In this respect the Church is just like the Army or the Navy or the Law-courts. There is plenty of ceremonial there, and it is all based on reverence, good manners, and common sense, *plus* tradition, and it is this element of tradition which imparts dignity to what otherwise would be very commonplace. A naval officer salutes the quarter-deck. That is an act of reverence; but why should it be reverent to raise the hand to the

hat? There is no answer except that it is a way they have always had in the Navy. It is tradition.

Considerations of this sort will cover the whole ground of the simpler ceremonial observances of the Church: bowing to the altar; bowing the knee before the Blessed Sacrament; holding the hands outstretched or joined; wearing appropriate uniform according to the character of the service that is being performed; illuminating the altar with candles during service-time; making the sign of the Cross; washing the hands before consecrating the Sacrament of the Altar. All these might seem rather bizarre if they simply represented the view of the individual priest as to what constituted reverence, good manners, and common sense; but if we take them as the *traditional* expression of these dispositions we shall find that they fit into the picture of the historical Church.

But on certain occasions Church ceremonial goes far beyond these modest limits. A great ecclesiastical function introduces the most elaborate ceremonial in the world, and it sometimes happens that casual worshippers, or onlookers, are disturbed and offended by what seems to them a great deal of outward show. It is very unlike anything that they read about in the Gospels, and it seems to them to have very little to do with the spirit of Christianity.

The first answer to be made is surely that if any one dislikes a splendid ceremonial he is not

obliged to take part in it. It is quite true that some people find that they can worship far better under simpler conditions. There is no reason why they should not do so. Fondness for ceremonial is not necessarily the mark of a 'good Catholic.' Indeed, there are few people who do so much harm to the true Catholic spirit, both in themselves and in other people, as those who are always fussing about ceremonies.

All the same, it *is* good that God should be worshipped at some times and places with all the beauty and dignity that man can command. Music, incense, processional lights, bells, rich vestments, splendid architecture may all be made means of showing forth the majesty of God; and it is quite inconsistent to pick out one or two of them and say that *they* are proper means of expressing the feelings of the worshipper, and *not* the others. Probably we shall find that the only reason for our selection is that some are familiar to us and others unfamiliar.

Two other things are perhaps worth saying about ceremonial:

1. Its object is not to *impress* other people, but to *express* the adoring spirit of the Church. In the end, however, it will be found that it is precisely this expressive worship, carried out without regard to the effect it may have on other people, which is in fact the most deeply impressive. If, on the other hand, we aim at impressiveness it is too likely that the only

impression produced will be that of our own self-consciousness.

2. The Gospels do not for the most part deal with public worship at all. Our Lord Himself took part in the splendid worship of the Temple as well as in the simple rites of the synagogue, and the only instructions He left as to public worship were: 'When ye pray, say, Our Father,' and, 'Do this in remembrance of Me.' Of these the former is our warrant for unadorned acts of public devotion, but the latter has in practice proved capable of being clothed with gorgeous ceremonial without losing its own essential stark simplicity. But if we want to see a biblical picture of great ceremonial we may turn to chapters v-vii of the Revelation, where it certainly looks as though the seer were describing the worship of heaven under the idealized form of an earthly worship in which he himself had taken part.

It is no part of the scheme of this book to explain all the elaboration of ceremonial which is to be found in some places;<sup>1</sup> but it may be useful to say something about such ceremonies as are in common use in many Anglican Churches.

The Mass, or Holy Eucharist, as the principal service, should be described first.<sup>2</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> I have tried to do this to some extent in a book written a good many years ago entitled *The Way of the Church*.

<sup>2</sup> For an explanation of the actual structure of the service, see pp. 96-103. This chapter only deals with the outward actions of those who take part in it.



altar and the celebrant are both usually vested in accordance with the season of the Church ; in gay colours if it is a festal time, in sombre ones if it is penitential. When it is neither one nor the other we usually wear green, which is nature's pervading tint. The altar is illuminated with candles, two or more, which express the joyous activity of worship, and serve to remind us that there was a time when, because of persecution, Christian worship had often to be conducted underground. On the altar lie clean linen cloths, partly because of natural seemliness, partly to remind us of the cloths which covered our Lord's Body in the tomb.

The chalice and paten (that is, the sacramental cup and plate) may be on the altar from the beginning, or on the side-table (known as the credence), or may be brought in by the celebrant. In any case they are usually veiled, out of reverence, and as soon as they are placed on the altar a special linen cloth (the corporal, because our Lord's Body, *Corpus*, is to lie upon it) is spread beneath them.

When possible the celebrating priest should be accompanied by two assistants, a deacon and a sub-deacon ; but this adds greatly to the elaboration of the service and is not often practicable. In lieu of these he generally has one or more lay assistants who give such help as is competent to those who are not in Holy Orders.

He usually begins the service by saying at the foot of the altar steps a psalm and a form of

confession and absolution. These do not as a rule appear in Anglican service-books, but they are traditional, and this little penitential introduction makes a good beginning to the service. He then goes up to the altar, kisses it in token of reverence, and proceeds with the service.

The centre of the altar is reserved (for the most part) for the central and most important part of the service. The Collect, therefore, is read at the south end. The priest faces the altar, which is the natural position for those parts of the service which are addressed to God. For the Epistle and Gospel some priests face the people (which is the position of common sense), but some remain facing, or almost facing, the altar (which is more convenient, as the book can then remain on its stand).

All stand for the Gospel to express reverence and willingness to act on its precepts. The Nicene<sup>1</sup> Creed (often omitted on weekdays) follows. It is usual to bow the knee at the two clauses, 'And was incarnate . . . And was made man.' This gesture seems to be used as a recognition of our Lord's Godhead at the very moment when in word we are being reminded of His humanity. The end of the Nicene Creed is one of the many points where it is customary to make the sign of the Cross. In this place it is like putting a seal at the end of a

<sup>1</sup> 'Nicene'—'belonging to Nicaea,' because the original nucleus of the formula was drawn up at the Council held at that place.

document as a mark of special solemnity and an attestation of truthfulness.

Next comes the Offertory. Bread and wine are solemnly offered to God and laid upon the altar, the wine having first been mingled with water.

The next point of ceremonial to notice is the ringing of a bell at the words 'Holy, holy, holy.' This is merely to draw attention to the fact that the central moment of the service is at hand. (When the service is *sung* this is of course quite unnecessary, and had better not be done.)

When the priest has consecrated the bread, he bows the knee ('genuflects'), and then raises the Host<sup>1</sup> above his head (the 'elevation'), so that it can be seen and venerated by the people. Bells are rung at this point also; both a small one inside the church and often a larger one which can be heard outside by those unable to be present. The same ceremonial is repeated at the consecration of the wine.

Immediately after the consecration the priest makes an act of oblation; that is to say, he solemnly offers to God, in the Name of Christ and the Church, the one true Sacrifice of the Body and Blood of Christ, which is of infinite value and provides the central meaning of the whole service of the altar. This prayer of

<sup>1</sup> 'Host' is from a Latin word meaning 'victim' and is commonly used to mean the Consecrated Bread of the Blessed Sacrament. It is sometimes loosely used of the particles of bread as yet unconsecrated.

offering, or 'oblation,' has unfortunately been displaced in the English service (though not in other Anglican rites, such as those of Scotland and South Africa). In England, therefore, the oblation at this point is usually made inaudibly ; but in this case the final words of the prayer of offering are sometimes said aloud, so that all may have opportunity to join in the great *Amen*.

Before the reception of the Blessed Sacrament the anthem, 'O Lamb of God,' is often said or sung.

As we have seen, the priest must always receive the Sacrament in order that the sacrificial act may be complete ; but when the service takes place at a late hour there are often no other communicants. The reason for this is the Church's strict rule that we must take no other food before Communion : and often there will be no one in church who is still fasting except the actual celebrant.

After the Communion it is necessary for the priest to consume what is left of the Blessed Sacrament, unless indeed it is to be reserved. (In any case he will need to consume the contents of the chalice.) It may be noticed that there is some variety of custom as to the point of the service at which this is to be done. Some priests do it immediately after the Communion, others wait until after the Blessing at the end of the service. Whichever custom is followed, it will always be necessary to rinse out the chalice with wine and water and drink the



rinsings in order to ensure the complete consumption of all that remains. The chalice and paten are then covered as at the beginning of the service. It is a common practice for the priest, before leaving the altar, to read the first fourteen verses of the Gospel according to S. John, as an act of thanksgiving for the Gifts bestowed upon the Church in and by the Blessed Sacrament.

The other ordinary services of the Church, 'Morning and Evening Prayer,' or, alternatively, 'Mattins and Evensong,' call for little explanation of ceremonial. They are not often ceremoniously rendered. Like the Mass, Evensong is sometimes sung 'solemnly' with the offering of incense, but more often it is said or sung straight through without any ceremonial at all, except the necessary vesture of the priests and lay clerks who are leading the service. This vesture is the same for all—a surplice worn over the cassock, which latter is the official dress of the clergy whether in or out of church. Clergymen often add a black scarf to distinguish themselves from the lay assistants, and also a 'hood' which differs according to the college and degree.

## CHAPTER XVI

*THE CHRISTIAN YEAR*

The year is divided up into seasons of festivity, seasons of penitence, and neutral seasons. These mostly have to do with the commemoration of events in the life of our Lord. There are also many individual feast-days, mostly in honour of the saints. 'Movable' and 'Fixed' Feasts. Liturgical colours. The weekly commemoration of our Lord's death and Resurrection.

**A**LL Churchmen should have some knowledge of the arrangement of the Christian year. It is full of anniversaries, and each anniversary gives us some special teaching about our religion.

There is one whole cycle of feasts and fasts which has to do with the life of our Lord. It begins with March 25th, the day when His Virgin Mother received the Annunciation (or Announcement) of the great destiny which was hers, and straightway 'conceived in her womb' and attained the dignity of being Mother to God Himself. Next comes Christmas Day, the Birthday of Christ; January 1st, His Circumcision; January 6th, His Manifestation; February 2nd, His Presentation in the Temple; Palm Sunday, the day of the triumphal entry

into Jerusalem; Maundy Thursday, the day of the Last Supper; Good Friday, the day of the Crucifixion; Holy Saturday, when He rested in the Tomb; Easter Day, when He rose from the dead; Ascension Day, when He ascended into heaven; and finally the Day of Pentecost or Whitsunday, when He sent down the Holy Spirit upon the Church. Of these days Easter is the greatest and Whitsunday the next.

There are two principal seasons of penitence: Advent, which introduces the Christian year, and Lent, which leads up to Good Friday and Easter. Of these, Lent is the more important and is much more a time of penitence than Advent. It is also a season of fasting, which Advent is not. The original idea of Advent was that of preparation for Christmas; but in later centuries it took on an additional character as looking forward to the Second Coming of our Lord and the final Judgement.

We should also notice Trinity Sunday, the Sunday after Pentecost, the object of which is to bring home to us the mysterious doctrine of the Three Persons in the One God.

The Thursday after Trinity Sunday is commonly observed as the Solemnity of *Corpus Christi*, a feast in honour of the Blessed Sacrament of our Lord's Body and Blood, although this day does not appear in many official Anglican Church Kalendars.

Easter is a 'Movable Feast,' and corresponds in date (though very roughly) with the Jewish

Passover. Many of the seasons, feasts, and fasts of the Church depend for their date upon Easter; they are so many days before or after. Like Easter itself, they are 'movable.' Thus the six and a half weeks just before Easter make up the season of Lent; the two and a half weeks before that are the season of Septuagesima, in preparation for Lent; Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday, Ascension Day, Whitsunday, Trinity Sunday, *Corpus Christi*, and all the Sundays after Trinity are early or late according as Easter is early or late. This variation amounts to about one month. On the other hand, Christmas, Epiphany, and all the feasts of the saints are on the same date every year. They are 'Fixed Feasts.'

The other festivals of the year, of which there are very many, are almost all anniversaries of the deaths of saints (or rather, as the early Church put the matter, of their birthdays into a new life).

This round of feast and fast is illustrated by the 'liturgical colours.' It is usual to have the ornaments of the church and of the minister coloured in accordance with a scheme which conventionally expresses the character of the day or season which is being observed. Thus (according to the most usual sequence) violet is used for times of penitence or special supplication; red for Pentecost and for feasts of martyrs; white for all other feast days; green for occasions which are neither feast nor fast;



and black for Good Friday and for services connected with the dead.

It should be noticed that, besides the yearly cycle of feast and fast, there is a commemoration of our Lord's death every Friday and of His Resurrection every Sunday. That is the reason why Friday is a day of abstinence, and Sunday a day of worship and rejoicing. On Sunday there is never any fasting or abstinence.

## CHAPTER XVII

*PRIVATE PRAYER*

- (a) Vocal Prayer. Morning and evening prayer. We may use prayers from a book, prayers we know by heart, and prayers made up on the spur of the moment.
- (b) Mental prayer. Meditation. Affections. Gazing upon God.
- (c) Recollection.
- (d) Some simple specimen prayers.

**P**PRIVATE prayer may be either 'vocal' or 'mental.' Vocal prayer may be defined as speaking to God. All public worship is vocal; and much of our private prayer will be of the same character. We wish to praise and adore God, to thank Him for His mercies, to confess our sins and ask forgiveness, to lay before Him our needs and those of other people, so far as we can see them. All this is most naturally done by putting the matter into words, and either saying them or at least letting them pass through our minds. Such prayer may be either something we have learned by heart and repeat from memory, or it may consist of unprepared sentences spoken to God as the needs of the moment require. Again it may well be a prayer which is actually read from a book. Probably it is best to use all three methods. We should be

very unwise to use invariably our own halting sentences in preference to the rich and splendid examples of prayer which are the common property of Christendom; and if any one feels any doubt about this he may well remember that our Lord Himself provided us with a *form* of prayer, and no one is likely to maintain that his own words of prayer are more acceptable to God than the 'stiff and formal' sentences of the 'Our Father.' It is of course a matter of complete indifference whether such prayers are learned by heart or read from a book. But it is certainly a good thing to learn to speak freely to God, however much we stumble over our words. There is no need to make up grand sentences. One thing at a time is best. There could not easily be a better prayer than 'Lord, have mercy on me and forgive me'; or, 'O God, I love Thee and I need Thee.'

Our ordinary morning and evening prayer will probably be principally vocal; but even here there should be a pause both at the beginning and the end during which we are not saying anything but just trying to make the presence of God a reality to ourselves. When we have done this there are five things to be *said* to God, each of which may be expanded to any extent. (1) I adore Thee. (2) I thank Thee. (3) I beg Thy pardon for such-and-such sins. (4) I ask Thee to give me what I need. (5) I beg Thee to bless and have mercy on those for whom I ought to pray.

All vocal prayer is an expansion of these five themes. Thus (1) is expanded into words in which we try to express our faith and hope and love towards God who is Father and Son and Holy Spirit. Under (2) we call to mind the special reasons which we have for being thankful to God ; for the fact that He has created us, for His redeeming love, for all that He has done for our souls and our bodies. (3) calls for some examination of conscience. Every evening we should try to find out by the help of the Holy Spirit what we have thought or said or done during the day which was wrong ; or what duties we have failed to perform. Then we shall know what sins we have to ask pardon for. The danger of (4) is that it should take the form of 'O God, give me what I want,' and should really be an effort to change the will of God. All petitions should be very humbly phrased. God knows best ; but He wants us to pray, and sometimes will not give us what He wishes us to have unless we have first asked for it as a gift from Him. (5) wants a little planning. There are certain people for whom we ought to pray every day ; but we cannot without weariness go through a list every day of all who need our prayers. Therefore it is a good thing to have certain classes of people for whom we will pray on Sundays, others on Mondays, and so on. An intercession book like *Sursum Corda* will be found very useful for



making such a plan, or we can write one down for ourselves.

Mental prayer consists essentially in directing our attention to God, without talking all the time. It would not be true to say that it meant just thinking about God; it is rather turning to God in thought and will and desire. That does not mean that in mental prayer we use no words at all. It is very difficult to think without putting our thoughts into words (though of course the words need not be spoken aloud). But in mental prayer words are reduced to a minimum, and the more experienced we are in this kind of prayer the fewer words we need. It takes less than a second to *say*, 'O God, I love Thee'; but a 'contemplative' needs no more words than this for perhaps an hour's prayer. He spends the time in loving God with his whole self, and the words of love are only used to help the affection of his heart.

There are very few contemplative adepts in the world, but that need not mean that mental prayer is only for the few. It requires much goodwill, much patience, some degree of earnestness, and a little leisure. But it does not require any special intellectual powers, and indeed the intellect plays less and less part in this kind of prayer as we persevere with it.

There are three main types of mental prayer, all of which are within the reach of simple people if they will persevere.

The first is called meditation, which means

thinking about holy things. If we want to make full use of our religion we need at first to take it bit by bit, as it is given to us in the Gospels, and think about it, and see what it teaches us. Then we should try to pray about it, as simply as possible, using very few words.

The second is called affective prayer, because it consists not so much in thoughts as in our affections. When we have learned what our religion means we need not go over that again and again in our time of prayer (although outside our time of prayer the more deeply we can see into and meditate upon the meaning of Christianity the better). But when once we have got the ground-work in place we are better occupied in prayer-time in faith and hope and love and sorrow for sin and adoration and thankfulness and giving ourselves to God than in thinking. This is a simpler form of prayer than the last, and if we will only be faithful in meditation for a time we may expect before very long to be able to fill up all our time of prayer with good affections of the heart.

The third type is simpler still. It consists of little more than a loving gaze upon God, very often without any particular feeling of profit or progress; in fact with very little feeling at all, but only an intense consciousness of the soul's need of God. This is the same type as is illustrated in the well-known story of the French peasant who was asked how he spent his time at his private devotions and answered, 'I just

look up at Him, and He looks down at me.' The intellect and the feelings are stilled: only the will cleaves loyally to God.

It will be seen that what is needed for advance in prayer is not secular education or intellectual ability or an emotional nature, but simply loyal adhesion of the will to Christ.

One important result of trying to live a prayerful life is that we gradually become 'recollected.' The thought of God is never far away. We turn our thoughts to Him naturally during the day, and He speaks to us through our conscience at once in time of temptation.

### SOME SIMPLE SPECIMEN PRAYERS

#### FOR THE MORNING

Begin by *thinking* about God.

God made me. God loves me. God came into this world in Jesus Christ and won forgiveness for me. God dwells within me, consecrating me to His service and giving me power to serve Him as I should.

Then *worship* Him.

'O God, Thou art my God: early will I seek Thee. I come from Thee: I belong to Thee: I need Thee: I give myself to Thee. Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts.'

Ask for protection from all sin and evil during the coming day, thinking of any special temptations which you are likely to have to meet.

Say the Lord's Prayer.

## FOR THE EVENING

Think about God, as in the morning.

Try, with His help, to find out how you may have sinned during the day : by deed, or word, or thought, or by omission of what you ought to have done, said, or thought. Ask for forgiveness, and if it is at all serious try to remember it for your next sacramental Confession.

‘O my God, I am very sorry that I have sinned in this way. Forgive me for the sake of Jesus Christ ; and I will try not to sin again.’

Make these well-known acts of faith, hope, and charity.

‘O my God, I believe in Thee and all Thy Church doth teach ; because Thou hast said it and Thy word is true.

‘O my God, I hope in Thee, for grace and for glory ; because of Thy mercy, Thy promises, and Thy power.

‘O my God, because Thou art so good, I love Thee with all my heart : and for Thy sake I love my neighbour as myself.’

Pray (1) for those for whom you pray every day ; (2) for those whom you specially wish to remember to-day.

N.B.—Do not leave out people’s names merely because they have passed into the next world. They need our prayers there as truly as they did here.

Thank God for all His mercies.

‘O my God, I thank Thee for having made



me, for having kept me safe to-day, for all the blessings of this life. Still more I thank Thee for sending Thy Son to be our Brother and live and die and rise again for us, for uniting us to Him by the holy Sacraments, and for the hope of heavenly joy hereafter.'

Say the Lord's Prayer and the 'Hail Mary,' and ask for the prayers of all the angels and saints.

'Into Thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.'

#### PRAYERS FOR SACRAMENTAL CONFESSION

First say very earnestly: 'O Holy Spirit, show me myself.'

Try to remember that you need to see yourself as God sees you. Then call to mind as well as you can what has been wrong in your life, in thought, word, deed, or omission, since your last Confession. If you have not yet made a Confession, you will need to go back over your whole life.

If you like to make notes with pencil and paper you can; it is generally best to do this for a First Confession; but it is not necessary. If you go to Confession frequently, it is usually better to do without writing, but you are perfectly free to write or not as you find it best.

When you have done your best to examine your conscience, try to be as sorry as you can; not simply because you are ashamed of having

committed sins, but because you want to love our Lord, and sin is what He hates.

Making your Confession is a very quick and simple matter. People generally use a form something like this :

‘I confess to Almighty God, and to you, my father, that I have sinned very much ; especially since my last Confession which was a month ago (or whatever time has elapsed since you last went to Confession) I have committed these sins. . . .’

Begin with the sins which you think are the worst, and say how often you have committed them. If you cannot remember how often, say ‘Many times’ or ‘Sometimes.’ If the sin has only happened once, say ‘Once.’ Do not leave the priest wondering whether your Confession refers to habits or to things done once or twice.

If you have honestly forgotten to mention a sin, no harm is done. But you must never keep back serious sins on purpose. It would be far better not to go to Confession at all than to do this. We must be honest.

When you have finished say :

‘For these and all my other sins which I cannot now remember I am very sorry : I firmly purpose not to sin again : I humbly ask God to pardon me ; and you, my father, to give me penance, advice, and absolution.’

When the priest has absolved you go to some other part of the church immediately and spend a little time in thanksgiving for the great gift

of absolution, and in praying against your chief temptations.

### PREPARATION FOR HOLY COMMUNION

The most important thing is to be sure that our sins are forgiven ; so if our consciences are uneasy we should go to Confession. It is a good thing to go to Communion frequently, and it is not likely that we shall need to go to Confession before every Communion, but we should always make a special examination of our conscience and be sure that we are truly sorry for all our sins.

Next to this, much the most important thing is to *wish* to come closer to our Lord. In the Holy Communion He comes as close to us as He possibly can ; and it is our business to give Him a real welcome. So a great point in preparing for Holy Communion is to remember how much we *need* our Blessed Lord, and to long to be more closely united to Him, more conscious of His presence, more fully sustained by His grace, more like Him in character. We should tell Him all this in our prayers the night before our Communion. Here is a good short prayer :

‘Lord, come to me that Thou mayest cleanse me :

‘Lord, come to me that Thou mayest heal me :

‘Lord, come to me that Thou mayest make me holy :

‘And grant that, when I have received Thee, I may never again be separated from Thee by my sins.’

Always be in church, if you can, five minutes before the service begins, and stay there five minutes after it is over.

After receiving the Holy Communion the great thing is to thank God with all your heart. The last psalm (150) is a good one to use for this purpose, and you can add other thanksgivings in your own words and end with the Lord’s Prayer. The best kind of thanksgiving is to remember during the rest of the day how near to Jesus you have been and try to retain the consciousness of His presence in your heart.



## CHAPTER XVIII

*HOLY SCRIPTURE*

Old Testament : two editions.

The Christian Church has adopted the sacred writings of the Jews. Needs discriminating use. Yet of untold value.

We cannot understand Christianity properly without it.

New Testament partly historical, partly epistolary. Touchstone of Christian doctrine. But only meant to be used by those who are already Christians.

Need to *study* the Bible and *meditate* upon it. Concentrate on the most important parts, especially the Gospels.

IT has already been pointed out<sup>1</sup> that our Lord left no written word behind Him. Christianity, therefore, as we saw, is not the religion of a book, but first of a Person, and secondly of a Society. None the less, the Church has its sacred writings, and they have been of enormous importance in the moulding of her life and doctrine.

Holy Scripture consists of two parts, the Old Testament and the New. The Old Testament is the sacred writings used by the Jewish Church. There are two *editions* (to use a modern word), one in Hebrew (mostly) and the other in Greek. The latter, which was of course the Bible of the Greek-speaking Jews, is much

<sup>1</sup> p. 22.

longer, containing many additional books which are of less canonical authority and are known as the Apocrypha. Though the technical authority of these is less than that of the Hebrew edition, the moral and spiritual level of some of them will bear comparison with any of the Hebrew Old Testament except the very finest passages of the psalms and the prophets.

The Catholic Church, as the heir to the privileges of the holy people of God, has adopted the Old Testament as a whole. There are many passages in it which fall below the Christian level, and a religion founded on the Old Testament would certainly be sub-Christian. There is hardly any sign of a confident faith in a future life to be found in the Old Testament, except indeed in the Apocryphal Book of Wisdom. The account of the Jews' seizure of the Holy Land is a story of bloody and ruthless slaughter. Religious hatred is often upheld as morally excellent. Finally, in parts of it there are strong traces of belief that Jehovah is little more than the tribal god of the Jews. It is obvious that much discrimination is needed before we can use the Old Testament freely either as a compendium of doctrine or as a guide to morals.

All the same, when rightly used, it is of untold value. For, first, we cannot understand Christianity at all unless we realize that it sprang up from a Jewish soil. It uses Jewish ideas of Messiahship, sacrifice, atonement, vocation,

and election, which, though in need of purifying, form part of the Christian religion as well as of the Jewish. The Old Testament emphasizes, as no other religious literature has ever done, the real personality of God. It breathes through and through the conviction that God is training His people for some future date when His full purposes will be fulfilled. Some of it is replete with that missionary spirit which the Jews as a whole so deeply failed to develop. Its elaborate regulation of sacrifice did at least tend to keep alive in men's minds the sense of the holiness of God, and His demand upon all our life. The social teaching of the prophets is always fresh and might have been written for our time. The psalms, in spite of their occasional bloodthirstiness and complacency, do express uniquely the desire of the soul for God and its misery at being separated from Him.

Christian piety, from our Lord Himself downwards, has been nourished on the psalms. To the Religious Orders they have been the breath of life and their staple and daily method of approach to God. There is no part of the Bible which is so full of the spirit of pure adoration or which so marvellously reflects every aspiration of the soul. Only, of course, they are not exactly *our* prayers, but somebody else's; and that somebody else had a very different religious environment from our own. We recite the psalms; but we do not identify ourselves with

every word of them, any more than we do with every word of the lessons.

We must always remember that the Old Testament is a Jewish book (or rather library) and needs much adaptation when it is used by Christians. Much of what is said about the *sinner* by the Jewish authors of the books can only be used by Christians when they are thinking about *sin*. On the Old Testament stage of development it was almost impossible to make the distinction. 'Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate Thee? . . . Yea, I hate them right sore, even as though they were mine enemies.'

Further, the idea of *development* will help us to read the Old Testament with sympathy and understanding. It was not all written down at once. If we include the Apocrypha, it ranges over about ten centuries. Many of the books are composite, and the different parts of them are on very different moral, spiritual, and intellectual levels. But taken as a whole it remains true that the Old Testament gives us a wonderful sense of a personal God leading on His people stage by stage, until at last there were some, howbeit only a few (a 'remnant,' to use Isaiah's word) to welcome His Incarnation—until at last there was a Maiden fitted, ready, and willing to be His Mother.

The New Testament falls into two main divisions, historical and epistolary. The historical part gives the story of our Lord's earthly life, concluding with the Resurrection. This is



contained in the four Gospels, which are followed immediately by the Acts of the Apostles which is S. Luke's account of the chief events in the early history of the Church, beginning with our Lord's Ascension and the Coming of the Holy Ghost. The epistolary part is a collection of letters from prominent leaders of the Church of apostolic days.

In the New Testament we have, as it were, the footprints in literature of the passing of our Lord through this earthly life. Nothing in any other literature can vie with its importance. Here is what was written down by persons who for the most part were actual contemporaries, and, if not eye-witnesses, at least intimate companions of those who were. These books are the continual test of Christian doctrine; for although they are none of them theological treatises, and although their treatment of doctrine is always unsystematic, there is quite enough of them for us to feel pretty sure about the general character of the apostolic teaching. Christian doctrine is founded upon the New Testament.

Only we must not imagine that any of the books of the New Testament were meant to be published to the world in general so that individuals might hammer out from them a religion for themselves. They were issued one by one, as they were needed, and always for those who were already Christians. We should not, therefore, attempt to teach Christianity by

teaching the Bible in the first instance. The first thing to do is to teach Christian doctrine, and then show how it can all be illustrated and proved by Scripture.

Study of the Bible is too much neglected. It is a series of books, not meant so much to be merely read, as studied and pondered. The old way of reading a chapter a day had much to be said for it. It did produce many generations who knew their Bibles, even if not always with much appreciation of their full meaning. But a better way is to form the habit of meditating on the Bible,<sup>1</sup> and using it as an important part of our prayers. A well-chosen Bible text, even a short one, will often be enough to start our meditation; and if we have not time for both reading and meditation there can be no question as to which is more important.

Only we must use some discrimination. Some parts of the Bible are vastly superior to others. It is a good thing to be more or less familiar with the whole of it; but the parts which are the daily food of our souls are only a small part of the whole. For example, one could not meditate profitably for long on the Book of Esther, and the same is true of much of the Old Testament. The parts which we should take into our inmost hearts are first the Gospels, which stand in a class by themselves, and, after those, the rest of the New Testament, the cream of the prophetic writings, and the psalms.

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 165, 166.

## CHAPTER XIX

*A RULE OF LIFE*

Unwisdom of allowing our religious life to be regulated by feeling or inclination.

A Rule of Prayer, Fasting, Almsgiving.

To some extent this rule is made for us by the Church.

(a) We should hear Mass at least on Sundays and great Holy Days ; we should communicate three times a year ; we should go to Confession, if we need it, not less than once a year.

(b) We should observe the days of fasting and abstinence as strictly as our age and strength permits.

(c) We should contribute in some way to the payment of our pastors.

It is obvious that (a) and (c) need supplementing by private rules of our own.

Minimum and maximum rules.

IT is very unwise to let our religious life be regulated by our feelings. No other department of life is treated in so haphazard a manner, We all have to work by rule, and eat and drink and sleep by rule. Most of us have to take our recreation time by rule, even though the nature of recreation is to allow the feeling of the moment to have some voice in settling what we are going to do. But if I am to play a game, I probably have to make some arrangement to do so ; if I am to read, I have to plan to have a

good book ready to hand. If I am to meet a friend, we must know where and when we are to meet.

It is worth laying stress on this last point, because our religious life has to some extent the character of recreation, in the literal sense of the word (re-creation), and we must not get into the way of thinking that recreation can be taken anyhow. Not only do we have to plan for it and regulate the time assigned to it, but also we have to educate ourselves in its technique.

Both these conditions apply to the specifically religious side of our life. We must find time for it, and we must learn what to do and how to do it. If religion is really the most important thing in life, it is foolishness to leave it to be regulated by nothing better than our own unruly desires. If we were all highly spiritual people it might be thought that such a plan would work; but even so, those most advanced in spiritual things will tell us that they have their times of dryness and distaste for prayer, and that those are the times when most of all they need to pray. It is the same with us ordinary people. There are times when we feel inclined for prayer and other exercises of the spiritual life; but often and often we have to do them because we know it is our duty, and not because we want to. The idea that there is some 'unreality' about that seems to be merely absurd. Some exercises of religion, like fasting, are performed as means to an end. If we wait until we are inclined to



make use of them, we shall wait all our lives. One might as well not cook the dinner until one was inclined to. But others no doubt, like prayer and Communion, are performed for their own sakes as worth doing in themselves. It is the regulation of these which we are most inclined to resent. This is not really sensible. It is like the man who says that he is not going to make conversation to his own wife, and who therefore when disinclined to talk leaves all the conversation to her ; and then perhaps wishes she would not talk so much. This is not inconsistent with having a real affection for her, but an affection which is governed by inclination only is liable to be a very selfish thing.

Our spiritual life should be guided by *rule*, and in particular we need rules for the three 'notable duties,' as they are called, inculcated by our Lord in the Sermon on the Mount. We need rules for prayer, for fasting, for almsgiving. As regards the first two—but only to a very slight extent as regards the third—the Church herself has laid down certain elementary precepts which form the basis of any truly Catholic rule of life. Much is left to our own sense of what is fitting, and what is God's will for ourselves ; but some things are prescribed by the Church.

In regard to prayer the Church expects us to be present at Mass on every Sunday and the chief Holy Days (Christmas, Epiphany, Ascension Day, All Saints' Day—these four at the very least). She expects us to communicate at

least three times in the year, of which Easter must be one (but not necessarily Easter Day itself).<sup>1</sup>

No one could call these rules exacting. The rules about fasting, on the other hand, do seem at first sight to be very strict. Actually, however, very much depends on the circumstances of the individual. The general principle is that there are some days (namely, Fridays) on which we do not eat meat. These are called days of abstinence.<sup>2</sup> There are other days on which we reduce the amount that we eat.<sup>3</sup> These are fast days, and include all days in Lent, all

<sup>1</sup> This is the present English rule. It first appears in the Prayer Book of 1552, and was given ecclesiastical authority in 1661. The Scottish rule is stronger, though a little vague. 'It is the duty of every confirmed member of the Church to receive the Holy Sacrament with frequency, and especially to receive it at Easter and at the other great festivals of the Church.' Great festivals in another rubric are enumerated as follows: 'Christmas Day, Epiphany, Easter Day, Ascension Day, Whitsunday, and Trinity Sunday.' But perhaps the two rubrics ought not to be read together. It can hardly have been the intention of the Provincial Synod to make Holy Communion compulsory on all these days. It is a serious matter to create new sins.

<sup>2</sup> There does not seem to be any distinctively Anglican authority for the distinction between days of abstinence and days of fasting. But in practice it is not customary to fast on ordinary Fridays.

<sup>3</sup> The original idea of a fast-day was a day in which no food was taken till the evening. This is hardly practical except for leisured people in hot countries! 'Fasting' has therefore come to mean eating one full meal and otherwise reducing the amount of food to what is really necessary.

Ember Days, and a few important vigils (that is, days of preparation before festivals). Finally there are days on which both fasting and abstinence should be observed. These are the Wednesdays and Fridays in Lent, Ember Days which fall on Wednesday or Friday, and also the Saturday Ember Day in Lent. But all busy and infirm people, as well as the young, the elderly, and the poor, are excused from fasting, and even abstinence is not insisted on if it involves serious difficulty.

Further, there is the Catholic rule about fasting before Communion. This is to be done out of respect to the Sacrament that it may be the first food which is tasted in the day. The object of the rule is therefore a matter of ritual rather than of self-discipline or mortification. The rule should in most cases be observed very strictly; but in cases where serious injury to health is likely to result from its observance it seems common sense to apply for a dispensation. Most bishops would be willing enough to grant this if they were satisfied of the reality of the need.

In regard to almsgiving the Church has been content to lay down a general rule that it is our duty to contribute to the support of our pastors, which has sometimes hardened into a precept to pay tithes.

Here, then, is a beginning: certain rules generally recognized among Catholics as of universal application. Any private rule that we

make for ourselves is not a substitute for the precepts of the Church unless it is a fact that we are really and actually hindered from following those precepts. (In that case, indeed, it is an excellent thing to make a rule for ourselves which will help us to live according to the real intention of the law even though we are unable to observe its actual letter.) But our own private rules ought to be an *addition* to those which the wisdom of the Church has made of general obligation. Thus it would be wrong for any one to say, 'I will go to Evensong on Sunday *instead of Mass*,' or, 'I will go to Mass on a weekday *instead of* on Sunday'; but any one might quite well make a private rule of going to Evensong *as well as* Mass on Sunday, or of going to Mass on a weekday *as well as* on a Sunday. The general law only lays down what every one should observe if he can; and it is obvious that it must be made as light as possible if it is to suit everybody. But if everybody lives down to this level no one is aiming very high.

We shall see this more clearly if we consider what the Church says (and does not say) about other acts of devotion. We are to communicate, according to Anglican law, not less than three times a year. Yet there are millions of Catholics who communicate every day. It is clear that they do not govern their practice by the rules which tell us the least that we can do. The case is still more clear if we consider the matter of private prayer. The Church leaves this matter



entirely to the individual. There is no general ecclesiastical rule as to when or for how long we are to pray, or what we are to say. There is the divine law, 'Men ought always to pray,' and the divine formula, 'Our Father,' and the apostolic rule, 'Pray without ceasing'; but the Church lays down no general precept as to how this is to be carried out. That is left to the individual, who, if he is wise, will have a very definite rule as to times and methods of prayer. For some it will be a few minutes a day, and for others perhaps some hours, but we must know what we are aiming at and what we think we ought to do.

In the case of fasting the case is slightly different. Here there are only too many rules, it might seem; the question is, How far need I observe them? In practice most people have to find reasons for sitting rather loose to the strictness of what the Church seems to expect. That, however, is all to the good. Fasting has its dangers, and not the least of them is a tendency to self-righteousness. This would be intolerably increased if it were possible for people to say, 'I fast much more strictly than the Church tells me to.' It is far better that the strong person should keep just level with strict Church law, and all the others should be obliged humbly to find excuses. But we ought to fast, and to do what we can towards a proper observance of the appointed days. This appointment of days is absolutely necessary.

No one likes fasting, and if it can be done at any time, it will be found, as in the case of prayer, that 'Any time is no time.'

Finally, almsgiving must somehow be regulated. We must give with the will and with the understanding, not simply on the impulse of the moment. The two dangers to guard against are those of giving only when our feelings are stirred, and of giving what we think we can afford—if that means what is left when we have bought everything which we seriously want. It is really necessary to think out the importance of the support of Church services, the support of missions, the general duties of ministering to the needy, and measure them against our other obligations and desires. One thing is quite certain: if we never deny ourselves anything *in order that* we may have something to give to God, there is something seriously wrong with our budgeting.

A Catholic Christian ought to be able to answer such questions as the following and govern them by rule.

What time am I going to get up to-morrow?

What time am I going to allow for prayer?

When shall I find this time and how shall I try to spend it?

How often do I intend to go to Confession?

On what days besides Sundays and great Holy Days do I intend to hear Mass?

How often and on what days am I to receive Holy Communion?

How should I keep fast days and days of abstinence?

How much do I usually put in the bag on Sundays, and (if I have anything of an income) what annual subscriptions should I make?

What time can I find each week for the reading and study of the Bible?

At what time ought I to go to bed to-night?

Along some such lines as these we can form our own rule of life, and it will be an enormous help to our spiritual life.

In the observance of the rule we must keep a mean between laxity and a fussy over-strictness. Obviously a rule is of no use at all if we do not trouble about observing it; but on the other hand we are not saved by the keeping of rules. At best they are no more than the scaffolding by means of which the fabric of the Christian life is to be built. There is nothing intrinsically sinful in breaking a rule we have made for ourselves. We must leave it to our consciences to decide in the particular instance whether it is actually a duty to keep it. *It may even be a duty to break it.*

In making such a rule, it is best to be clear in our own minds whether what we are laying down for ourselves is a minimum which we intend to observe with strictness, hoping that perhaps we may be enabled to do a little more, or whether, on the other hand, it is an ideal which we are going to try to attain. Or the two plans may be combined. Thus, to take an example at

random, I might say, 'Whatever happens, I am going to get up on all weekdays at 7 o'clock'; or, 'I am going to try to get up at 6.30 as often as possible'; or again combining the two, 'I am going to try to get up at 6.30, but on no account will I be later than 7.'



## EPILOGUE

THIS little book is very far from being a treatise. It deals with a large number of rather difficult subjects, and deals with them in a very summary fashion. Its only aim is to give a general view of the belief and practice of those who claim to be both 'Catholics' and 'Anglicans'; that is to say, loyal members both of the universal world-wide Church which our Lord has built, and also of the Church of England or of one of its 'daughter' or 'sister' Churches. Such people are 'Catholics' first and 'Anglicans' afterwards. They believe that the Church of England and other Anglican Churches are reformed parts of the ancient Catholic Church, and not new Churches which have sprung up in opposition to the ancient Church. Their basis of teaching is the general tradition of Catholic theology. Some of this teaching is bound to be strange in the ears of those who have been accustomed to think of the Church of England as coming into being at the time of the Reformation. In a sermon many things have to be taken for granted, and often occasional worshippers at 'Anglo-Catholic' churches feel that the preacher and themselves are living in quite different atmospheres. His

sermons miss the mark because he is shooting at the wrong target. He is assuming much that his hearers do not believe or even understand.

To vary the metaphor again, much Church teaching deals not with foundations but with superstructure. It assumes the existence of God, and the truth of the Incarnation, and the doctrine of the Church, and goes on to draw further inferences from these. This cannot altogether be helped. The preacher is to some extent obliged to assume that his hearers are orthodox Church people; but if they are not, what he says may merely bewilder them.

This book contains a good deal of superstructure, but what I have tried to show is that what we believe about the sacraments and the whole actual practice of our religion depends on the way in which we think about the Church of God.

The Catholic religion is not just a conglomeration of ideas and practices. It is an organic growth, like a living body. It all holds together, and we shall only get to understand it if we will treat it as a living whole. The best way to get knowledge of a living thing is to live with it; and my real hope for this volume is that it may help some people to practise the Catholic religion with some understanding of what it all means, but not demanding to understand everything at once. To some extent we must all experiment; but religious experiments rest on

the faith that God 'is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.'<sup>1</sup> If we make the experiment of living the Catholic life, we can at least be sure that it is not a quack remedy that we are trying, but one which has stood the test of many millions of experiments.

<sup>1</sup> Heb. xi. 6.

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